Ceasefire: All quiet on the Senate front

By Christine O. Avendaño and Michael Lim Ubac

AFTER TWO DAYS OF ACRIMONIOUS debates over the committee of the whole report linking Sen. Manuel Villar to the C-5 road controversy, senators agreed to a ceasefire yesterday.

They said they would focus on approving measures in the remaining three session days before Congress goes on a break for the election period.

CEASEFIRE /A2

SPORTS / A16

Federer, Serena, Li Na in Aussie Open semis

METRO / A17

Ivler to be transferred to QC jail

ACROSS / A13

Ban on tuna threatens 150,000 jobs

WORLD / A19

Two Koreas trade artillery fire; North vows no letup

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS
Thursday, January 28, 2010 ★★ Tuesday / Vol. 23 / No. 51 P18

UN not releasing bodies of 3 RP soldiers until 100% sure of identity

By Jocelyn R. Uy

THE UNITED NATIONS WILL NOT release the remains of the three Filipino UN peacekeepers who died in the Jan. 12 Haiti earthquake until it is "hundred-percent" sure of the bodies' identities, so-

UNPKOT /A7

DOUBLE MIRACLE US Airborne soldiers attend to Rica Dilorinil, who was rescued from a collapsed building in downtown Port-au-Prince on Tuesday, after an amazing 12 days under the rubble on a street named —what else?— Rue de Miracle. an-

12 DAYS UNDER

Man pulled out of wreckage alive on Haiti's Miracle Street

PORT-AU-PRINCE—IT HAPpened, quite on "miracle" street.

Two weeks after a catastrophic earthquake, US troops pulled a man alive from under a collapsed building in Haiti's capital on Tuesday as UN troops opposed new gas at survivors desperate for food.

The man, covered in dust and dressed only in underpants, was rescued by soldiers of the 82nd Airborne Division from a ruined house—believe it or not—on Rue de Miracle (Street of Miracle) in downtown Port-au-Prince, a Reuters witness reported.

US authorities identified him as 33 years old and said he had

MAN PULLED /A2

Carpio seeks SC job but ...

Most senior SC justice won't take it from GMA

By Norman Bordadora

HE IS INTERESTED IN being Chief Justice all right, but will consent to be appointed only by the country's next President and not by President Macapagal-Arroyo.

In a Jan. 26 letter to the Judicial and Bar Council (JBC), Associate Justice Antonio Carpio said he was interested in being considered for nomination as Chief Justice, but "on the understanding" that the JBC submits his nomination only to the next President.

Carpio's opinion that the next Chief Justice should be appointed by Ms Arroyo's successor adds to the many issues being debated on the appointment of Chief Justice Reynato Puno's successor.

Carpio cited as his reason the constitutional ban against the President making appointments from March 11, 2010 until June 30, 2010, when Ms Arroyo's term expires.

If seniority were the only consideration, Carpio, the most senior Supreme Court justice, would be in line to succeed Puno when the latter retires on May 17.

CARPIO /A2

IN THE HIGHLANDS Onlookers in a remote Benguet town are amazed at how fast the PCOS machines are reading a long ballot in mere seconds. Comelec and Smartmatic officials test the machine in Bokod, Benguet. It is dead zone for mobile phone signals, making it an ideal site for testing the transmission of votes. "It's a success," all concerned exclaimed.

Poll machines tried, tested in Benguet, Taguig, etc.

By Delmar Carino and Vincent Cabreza
Inquirer Northern Luzon

BAKUN, BENGUET—"KAMAN di bare" (Ito, that's how it works) was all he could say after the voting machine read each long ballot in seconds.

Like his town mates, 40-year-old farmer Wilfo Pandit trekked to the Kenguan-Cabaruan Elementary School at Sitio Bein in Barangay Dalipey here on a cold Wednesday morning to see how the automated election machine looked.

Pandit and many teachers who watched from the sidelines said they were amazed when the machines read each long ballot in a matter of seconds.

"How I wish I could try voting now," Pandit said.

In the capital town of La Trinidad, 63 km away, Marilou Madeyag and Caroline Tabayan, Smartmatic's regional coordinators, said the exercise was a success when the capital received the transmissions from

VOTING /A4

Manual count set for 30% of precincts if machines fail

By Lala B. Salaverria and Christine Avendaño

A 30-PERCENT FAILURE RATE?

The Commission on Elections is prepared for a manual count of the votes in 30 percent of the "clustered" precincts in next May's elections should the automated counting machines fail to work, Comelec Commissioner Armando Velasco told lawmakers yesterday.

But Pantaleon Alvarez, Bayan Muna Rep. Teodoro Casiño immediately saw red, warning that the kind of failure rate that the Comelec was apparently prepared to accept was too big for an automated election.

There should be a limit to how much contingency plans can be accepted without compromising the elections, he said.

A 30-percent failure rate could very well compromise the results, said Golez.

Velasco said the manual count was part of the backup plan in case the automated elections, being held nationwide for the first time, were to hit a snag. (Clustering refers to several

MANUAL /A4

10-pt. education reform campaign launched to elect 'Education President'

By Philip C. Tubeza

EDUCATION NATION, A COALITION of capitalists of industry and other concerned citizens, yesterday launched a blueprint for reforms to save the Philippine education system from collapse.

The coalition presented its 10-Point Education Reform Agenda and offered it to presidential candidates in an effort to make education the No. 1 issue in the May elections.

"We at Education Nation are saying 'Enough!' We cannot simply sit back and watch our education system further deteriorate in the hands of a government that has shown little concern for the plight of millions of Filipino children," Ramon del Rosario Jr., chair of the Philippine Business for Education (PBEd), said at the launch held at the Asian Institute of Management (AIM) in Makati City.

"What we are seeing is that we really need an Education President, because ... we have to have at the very top somebody who is ready to call the shots and enforce the principles, if we are to reform education," said Ed Ilberto de Jesus, 10-PT EDUCATION /A8

Mangudadatu blames Palace for failure to stop 'violent' Ampatuans

By Marlon Ramos and Cathy C. Yamsuan

FORMER DEFENSE SECRETARY GILBERT Teodoro and other Maguindanao officials knew of the violent nature of the Ampatuans but failed to stop them from bullying their political rivals in Maguindanao.

This was part of the tearful testimony of Vice Mayor Esmael "Toto" Mangudadatu of Buluan, Maguindanao, at the resumption yesterday of the hearing for the bail petition of Datu Unsay Mayor Andal Ampatuan Jr., the principal suspect in the Nov. 23 massacre of 57 people in the province.

Mangudadatu, 41, lost his wife, two sisters-in-law and an aunt in the bloodbath that also left at least 30 journalists and media workers dead.

Clad in a black coat over a light blue shirt, the widower kissed a copy of the Qur'an before and after testifying.

He told the court of Judge Jocelyn Solis Reyes that Palace officials had tried to dissuade him from challenging Ampatuan Jr. in the race for governor in the May elections.

MANGUDADATU /A6

ON THE WITNESS STAND Vice Mayor Esmael Mangudadatu arrives to testify at the continuing hearing for the bail petition of the principal suspect of the Maguindanao massacre.

Parents lose ground as technology use among kids rises

LIKE MANY WORKING PARENTS, Brenely Rackington armed her 11-year-old daughter with a cell phone in fifth grade when the time came for her to venture out alone.

At first, it was a great way to stay in touch.

That was then.

Now 13, Samantha's grades have slipped drastically, and she is obsessed with texting, Facebook and her laptop, sometimes falling asleep in her clothes clutching her phone.

When her texting exceeded

PARENTS /A9

Second FRONTPAGE

WEATHER FORECAST

TODAY: Northeast Monsoon affecting the country. Metro will experience mostly cloudy skies with isolated rainshowers. The rest of the country will be partly cloudy to mostly with isolated showers.

Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	Isabela/Tuguegarao	Partly Cloudy
Baguio	Partly Cloudy	Aparri	Partly Cloudy
Tagaytay/Nasugbu	Partly Cloudy	Clark	Partly Cloudy
Legazpi	Partly Cloudy	Iloilo/Roxas	Partly Cloudy
Puerto Princesa	Partly Cloudy	Cebu	Partly Cloudy/Isolated Rains
Coron	Partly Cloudy	Tacloban	Mostly Cloudy
Dagupan	Partly Cloudy	Cagayan de Oro	Mostly Cloudy
Laoag	Partly Cloudy	Zamboanga	Mostly Cloudy
Basco	Partly Cloudy	Davao/General Santos	Mostly Cloudy

PCSO Lotto Results

6/55 (Monday)	5	10	6	22	12	18
6/42 (Tuesday)	3	4	8	8	0	6
4D (Tuesday)	3	0	4	3	1	4	5
6/49 (Tuesday)	3	7	8	14	27	45

P29,079,606.00

Gov't, MILF to swap peace plans

By TJ Burgonio

THE GOVERNMENT PANEL NEGOTIATING PEACE WITH THE Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) has been given the go-signal to present a draft peace agreement with its counterpart in Malaysia, Malacañang said yesterday.

The panel, headed by Foreign Undersecretary Rafael Seguis, has flown to Kuala Lumpur to present the draft agreement to its MILF counterparts, Mohagher Iqbal, through Malaysian facilitators, Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita said.

"It is highly probable that they (MILF) might also submit—other than their reply—their own draft because they know that they are meeting each other," he told reporters on the phone.

The government and MILF panels are in Kuala Lumpur to exchange their draft agreements.

Racing against time

The administration is racing against time to ensure the signing of a final peace agreement with the secessionist rebels in the remaining months of President Macapagal-Arroyo, who steps down on June 30.

Both Seguis and Iqbal had declined to give specific details of their drafts, but indicated that they covered the political powers of the Bangsamoro, wealth sharing and the ancestral domains of the Bangsamoro.

Ermita went as far as stating the government draft used the Constitution as a term of reference, and ratified "double provisions."

"There are some provisions that we consider as executive caution that could be double, and that if they are implemented, they could ease the tension of negotiation because the two panels," he said without going into specifics.

Seguis presented the draft during the national security Cabinet group meeting in Malacañang on Tuesday. He was given clearance to present it to his counterpart in Kuala Lumpur, Ermita said.

"Let's see [how things will develop]," Ermita tartly said over a phone interview from Malaysia.

Forgiveness, humility

Meanwhile, the head of the Office of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process (Opapp), Secretary Annabelle Abaya, "forgiveness and humility" are the best way to achieve lasting peace.

"Forgiveness is a need for peace which helps in economic development," Abaya said during the launching the nationwide "Projects for Peace" forum at the Ateneo Diana Hotel in Cotabato County, Pasig City.

"We have to be patient and humble with people whom we make peace with," she added.

Abaya said civil society is a partner in prosecuting the comprehensive peace programs down to the community level.

She briefed the participants about the programs and solicited project proposals for financial and technical support for this year.

The day-long forum was attended by peace educators, journalists and government officials.

The second "Projects for Peace" program will be held in Davao City tomorrow and the third will be in Iloilo City on Feb. 2.

Gibo favors cash perks for natural birth control

By TJ Burgonio

TEODORO

PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE Gilbert Teodoro yesterday offered an apologia for abandoning the administration bandwagon, and even proposed granting cash incentives to poor families practicing natural birth control methods.

The administration standard-bearer found himself defending his and his wife's decision to withdraw support from the controversial measure before dozens and students and teachers at the University of the Philippines in Manila.

At the forum dubbed "Make Health Count," Teodoro explained that the debate over the measure in the House of Representatives had become an "antidemocracy" that the stakeholders mostly forgot about the problems of population.

Big debate

"The big debate is whether or not the government can shape a moral choice. And that is the argument of the Church. That the government should not actively advocate for making a moral choice. The debate stopped there," he said.

Teodoro believed that he agreed with the Church position, and said that the government should be "neutral" but should support the "moral choice" of every individual with measures.

The Church, for its part, should take it upon itself to shape the "moral choice" by acknowledging the problem of a growing population, he added.

Pending for years

"If they use the rhythm method, we can have some resources to support that by a conditional cash transfer if they do not a have birth within a year or so for the poorest of the poor," he said, referring to the government's program of granting cash to poor families with children enrolled in public schools.

The bill known as the "Reproductive Health and Population Development Act of 2009" has been pending for years in the House due to fierce opposition from the Church.

It promotes information and access to both natural and modern family planning methods, and ensures no coercion in implementation whose women and couples have the freedom of informed choice on the mode of family planning they want to adopt based on their needs, personal convictions and religious beliefs, according to its authors.

Remember was accompanied with Teodoro's explanation, observing that he merely reduced the debate to a problem of population and economics.

"I think he has a problem with appreciating the problem of reproductive health as simply a problem of population and economics. It's an issue of the rights of women to determine what to do with themselves," he said in an interview.

He branded Teodoro's pronouncements that the government should support the people's choice as a "narrowminded statement."

"He has caved in to the Church and agreed with his President, whose position in the matter why we have a big problem in population," Bernadino said.

'Don't judge me by my ties to GMA'

SAN MANUEL, PANGASINAN—Administration standard-bearer Gilbert Teodoro Jr. on Tuesday said it would be the people's loss should they argue his candidacy on the basis of his association with President Macapagal-Arroyo.

He was reacting to comments by students who attended a political forum at the Polytechnic University of the Philippines (PUP) in Sta. Mesa in town.

"People who judge me because of my ties with the administration are the ones who lose. That is what is bad about many of us Filipinos. I should not be judged purely on [the basis of] my association [with Ms Arroyo]," he said in Pilipino.

Raoul Bacungbacal, 18, a second year PUP student, said he found Teodoro's ties with Ms Arroyo "troubling."

"He could be good but sadly he is with the administration. That's why he would fail in his bid for the presidency. Too many people are angry at the government. Of course, he must remain loyal to Gloria if he wins," he said in Pilipino.

But not all students found Teodoro's ties to Ms Arroyo a problem.

Blue Kim Simon, another PUP student, said he was convinced Teodoro could bring the reforms and changes needed for the country to take off.

Many students also asked Teodoro about the political dynasties that spawned the previous administration. He replied by stressing that it was his goal to end the political dynasties because "all political parties should help solve the country's problems."

Carmela Reyes-Estrope, Inquirer central luzon

I'm too old for this, says reluctant press secretary

By TJ Burgonio

HE'S A HEMODIALYSIS AND DIETS MODE LEERlandaic receiving the rumor-has-fishing it out.

New Press Secretary Cesa Jolan Jr. said yesterday he would act as a facilitator in press briefings that follow the regular Cabinet meeting every Tuesday but otherwise let the deputy spokespersons do the rest of the talking.

"When I was first asked to do this, I said 'I'm too old for that,'" the 74-year-old Jolan, Manila Bulletin's editor in chief, told reporters during a surprise visit to the Office of the Press Secretary. "At my age, why should I want to [do something like this]?"

He spoke from a once-a-week appearance, he said, being by the use of the word would be apportioned between deputy presidential spokespersons Gary Olivar and Charito Planas, Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita binds the media every Wednesday.

"They think I have the credentials. I have credentials for newspapering and editorship, not for press officership. That's why I am not a spokesperson and I see what I can do," he said.

President Macapagal-Arroyo tapped Jolan to fill the post created by Press Secretary Cerge Remonde who died of a heart attack last week.

Jolan sounded reluctant at assuming his post, and conceded he wasn't sure if he was ready for the grueling tasks that is entailed.

"I wouldn't say it's ready. I'm not prepared for this. I wasn't prepared for this," he said, but added that he found comfort in the fact he wouldn't only be serving the post for five months. "I'll be here for five months. At the end of five months, I'll be with you again."

The veteran editor saw his role both ways: "I'll try to help you get the news. At the same time, I'll try to help the administration get its point across. I don't know how hard that will be. We will all have to try."

He, however, refrained from promising to show up Ms Arroyo's consistently poor ratings in the polls.

"I have no plan to do anything about that. The ratings are the results of something in the past. We can't do anything about that. What we plan to do is what we can do to be in the near five and a half months. The rank will take care of itself. Ultimately, history will have to judge the Presidency," he said.

Gov't warned vs 'midnight' power deals

By Mitz Calleja

VICE PRESIDENTIAL CANDIdate Jejomar Binay has warned the Arroyo administration against resorting to "midnight power source deals" as power outages started hitting Luzon.

The Makati mayor said it has always been convenient for the national government to justify power generation deals since the country has always lacked enough generating capacity to meet the demand.

Binay, former President Joseph Estrada's running mate, said the shortage would also lead to "snatching or midnight power deals that are hatched in the dark" and "abuse rounded were seems as to harden taxpayers."

On Monday, Meralco said the provincial Bulacan, Cavite and Laguna suffered two to three hours rotating blackouts after a breakdown on one of Sual power plant's units.

HBW Office Marker
HBW Office
ALL BOOKSTORE, WHOLESALE & PROVINCIAL OUTLET

BDO

BDO Rewards e-Raffle Promo

BDO Rewards

Win a MacBook by earning more BDO Rewards points!

A total of 20 MacBooks will be given away every month from January to March 2010

Get one (1) raffle entry for every 50 points earned within each month.

We find ways

New YEAR. New BODY. New YOU!

BUY 1 TAKE 1

PHYSIQUE INCH-LOSS TREATMENT

until January 30, 2010 only

Don't miss this limited promo. Get your dream waistline this 2010.
Call now for a FREE consultation.

Call 894-BODY (2639)

Yes, you can!

marie france

Candidates worried over automated voting

By Leila B. Salaverria
lsalaverria@inquirer.com.ph

THE PROBLEMS BEING FORESEEN for voters in the automated elections are also a source of worry given concern for first candidates who worry whether their supporters' votes would be properly transmitted.

Many candidates have become the champions of voter education because of the risk that mistakes in filling out the ballots could result in the votes to their favor.

Lydia Bay Santos Tolentino, 61, said he was concerned whether voters, especially those in remote provinces, will understand how the new ballot works.

Salvacion urged the Comelec to actively teach people how to cast their votes properly.

In the automated elections, voters will not have to write down the name of the candidates of their choice but fill in ovals on the ballots.

But that will be required a for them to shade a circle next to the name of their chosen candidate.

It's voter choices more than one candidate for a position, the machine will not count his vote

Meralco defers hike in power charges

By Ana R. Rosco

THE MANILA ELECTRIC Co. (Meralco), the country's biggest power distributor, is reducing its rate hike by suspending the implementation of an increase in its distribution, supply and metering charges, until certain issues have been resolved.

In a filing with the Energy Regulatory Commission (ERC) last Tuesday, Meralco said the suspension will allow the government regulator to resolve a motion filed by Bohol Multilink.

Multilink has questioned some details of an ERC decision raising allowed Meralco to increase its distribution, supply and metering charges by an average 26.9 centavos per kilowatt hour, starting Feb. 1, 2010, under the performance-based regulation (PBR) scheme for the 2010 regulatory year.

ERC hearing

Jesenia de la Peña, Meralco vice president and head of public relations, said the temporary suspension will end when the ERC resolves the Multilink motion and addresses all other issues that may be raised by other "interveners."

The ERC has set a hearing for Feb. 5 to also discuss Meralco's motion to commence on Multilink's motion not later than Jan. 31.

Other intervenors like the National Association of Electricity Consumers for Reforms (Nasecore), the Federation of Las Piñas Village Associations (Lafva) and the Federation of Villages Associations (Fova) were also directed to file their comments on Multilink's motion.

"We do hope that all parties of record will avail of the opportunity accorded by the Feb. 5 hearing to state and defend their respective positions for or against the PBO decision," De la Peña said.

Meralco's first rate adjustment under the PBR scheme was implemented in May 2009, almost 40 years after the last rate increase in June 2003.

Under the PBR scheme, a power utility may charge base level or approved investment and operating expenses related to the distribution of electricity.

Better rates

Because it is incentive-based, Meralco said the PBR method would result in better electricity rates, more efficient delivery of services, and optimal use of a fixed assets.

Under the PBR scheme, Meralco implemented last September the so-called Guaranteed Service Level (GSL) payout for regulatory year 2008, refunding P1.02 billion to more than 770,000 customers.

In areas where Meralco was not able to meet its service commitments.

YearBooks on Demand
Fast and Affordable Yearbook Printing Service
• Using the latest digital print technology, printing takes 10 working days only.
• We print only the quantity you need, perfect for class of 30 or 300.
• Available in High Quality Full-Color or Black & White printing, Hardbound or Softbound
• Used by Top Universities and Schools
capitalbooks

ATALA LIFE
NET ASSET VALUE PER UNIT
INVESTMENT FUNDS
ALFA PESO BOND FUND
ALFA DOLLAR BOND FUND

Helping those who can't hear well hear better...
Sountex
Call 887-1818 today

We Are... TradeONE
MANUFACTURER'S AUTHORIZED DISTRIBUTOR
TECO MOTORS & INVERTERS
Gear Motor Single Phase Three Phase

Don't let Diabetes slow you down!
Take GLUCOsential
mercury drug

Most Complete Line of Cleaning Equipment
P3,700
P38,500
CLEARCITY COMMERCIAL INC.

SLIMMERS WORLD
BUY 1 MONTH GET 1 MONTH FREE!
Great Body, Great Skin.
BUY 15 TREATMENTS GET 15 FREE!
PLUS! Personal Training and all the Latest Aerobics!
SPECIAL OFFER
GOOD UNTIL 10PM TONIGHT!!!
I Lost 44 lbs.! Won the Great Body Contest. Christine Hermoso
BEFORE
MEN CAN HAVE GREAT SKIN TOO!
FREE DIAMOND ULTRAPEEL TREATMENT
BOOK NOW!
"All our full programmes are guaranteed!"
CALL NOW FOR YOUR FREE CONSULTATION!!!
• NO MONTHLY DUES ON LIFETIME MEMBERSHIP
• NO JOINING FEES!
• CREDIT CARD OPTIONS AT 0%
• MEDICAL SUPERVISION AT ALL CENTERS
Diamond Facial
FACIAL WITH DIAMOND ULTRAPEEL to give you a flawless skin.
CALL OUR ONE - STOP SUPER CENTERS FOR FITNESS, SKIN, BODY AND FACE.
FITNESS HOTLINE: 536-3333
SKIN HOTLINE: 525-8771
MOBILE NUMBER: 091- SLIMMERS (75466377)
www.slimmersworld.com.ph * inquire@slimmersworld.com.ph

Mangudadatu: Palace failed to stop Ampatuans

From page A1

This was how Mangudadatu recounted his hunt of events.

Teodoro, the standard-bearer of the ruling Lakas-Kampi-CMD, called Mangudadatu to a meeting at Café Adriatico in Malate, Manila, on Oct. 18 to discuss his planned run for governor.

Teodoro asked him if he was determined to face Ampatuan to which he said yes, the first defiance involving rumored him against doing so.

"That's how it was a lot. To. to. I'm know there people are prone to violence," Teodoro told the Filipino.

Weeks before the massacre, former Sup. Prospero Pichay, allies of Gov. Luisa Ejercito (LIKE) told Mangudadatu to be careful. "Mag-ingat ka, Toto. Victims ang mga taong ganyan."

2 meetings

In his one-and-a-half-hour testimony, Mangudadatu said President Macapagal-Arroyo's chief political adviser, Gabriel Claudio, facilitated his "reconciliatory meetings" on July 30 and Aug. 11 between the Mangudadatus and the Ampatuans.

In those meetings, Andal Ampatuan Jr. strongly demanded that he declare that he would not contest Sangguniang A's governorship, Mangudadatu said.

"I just told him that there was a chance from my constituents for me to run for governor," he said.

Mangudadatu related a number of violent incidents that occurred in his family's turf in Maguindanao months before the massacre.

He said he sought the help of Mr. Arroyo when government forces seized the firearms of the entire police force of Datu Unsay town, where his brother was the mayor, on July 5, 2009.

During three examinations by State Prosecutor Leo Dacera, Mangudadatu said he thought Ampatuan Jr. ordered the disarmament after he refused to accede to the demand that he drop his planned motor graveyard.

He said that on July 9, 2009, he and his cousin, Saiyen Mangudadatu, Sukarie Mangudadatu, went to Cotabato, Pampanga, to personally bring his concern to Mr. Arroyo.

"The President called [Armed Forces Chief of Staff Gen. Victorio] Ibrado and instructed him to order the soldiers in Maguindanao to give back the firearms of the Datu police," he said, adding:

"The President said we are not allies of [Moro rebel leader] Nur Misuari and that the Ampatuans are her shining people."

He added that Chief Insp. Sukarno Ebrap (the then acting police director of Maguindanao), Col. Medardo Gratilanz (chief of the 601st Infantry Brigade), and a certain Col. Nelson immediately strained the guns.

Past allies

Mangudadatu also testified that the Ampatuans and his enemies were political allies for over 10 years before their falling out in 2008.

He said his family decided to never see with the Ampatuans when the clan protests ordered the killings of over Esmeralda and seven of his men.

"That's the time I decided to drift away from Ahmid," he said.

Datuan Ahmid Mangudadatu is elaborate on the incident, but Andal Jr.'s lawyer Sigfrid Fortun protested, saying Datuan is irrelevant to the client's petition for bail.

Judge Reyes granted Fortun's objection and instructed Dacera to avoid issues to ascertain his questions.

Fortun also succeeded in blocking questions of the prosecution regarding his client's character.

Mangudadatu said the tension between the two clans started to have when reports about his plan to join the 2007 gubernatorial race in Maguindanao reached the Ampatuans in December 2006.

He said Ampatuan Sr., who runs then proposing to seek a third and last term as governor, called him his three brothers, his two cousins and their mother to a meeting.

Mangudadatu said Ampatuan Sr. promised to assist him governor of Shiah Imamat, one of three proposed provinces that would be carved from Maguindanao province.

But Ampatuan Sr.'s plan to convince the provinces backed out he failed to satisfy logistics requirements, he said.

Mangled body

Mangudadatu became emotional when he told the court about other events that led to the massacre.

He occasionally sipped from a water bottle and bowed his head.

He broke into tears when Dacera showed him to identify the photographs of the mangled body of his wife Bai Lenalyn.

"The family decided to send my wife, my sisters, my aunt and my mother-friends to file my certificate of candidacy [on Nov. 23] because Ahmid's brothers up to treat women with respect," he said.

Mangudadatu also said he was able to talk to his wife by phone moments before she and other members of the convoy were shot dead.

To back that claim, the court subpoenaed telecommunications firms Globe and Smart to provide copies of the call records of Mangudadatu and his slain wife's mobile phones.

Judge Reyes set Mangudadatu's cross-examination on Feb. 15. Reyes then asked for more witnesses to testify for the prosecution.

In on the plan

In another testimony, witness Rhiza Mae Sinsuat said a confidante of Ampatuan Jr. was initial briefing that "high officials in Manila" were aware of the plan to block the filing of Mangudadatu's certificate of candidacy for Maguindanao governor in the said day.

Sinsuat, a member of Dela Abdullah Sanggil mayor's local board in Sultan Barbard, said Norsaida Dimanisang Ampatuan told him late in the afternoon of Nov. 23 that he and Andal Jr. were "in Manila" to "finalize" the plan to block the filing of Mangudadatu's certificate of candidacy for Maguindanao governor as well as her husband

Useless vitamins 'selling billions,' forum told

By Doris Pascbugat

MORE THAN HALF OF THE ESTIMATED P150 billion spent each year on medicines go to products that are unnecessary such as vitamin supplements because of misleading marketing promotions, a former health secretary said Wednesday.

Former Health Secretary Alfredo Bengzon said time with the way unconventional products are being advertised usually using celebrity endorsers.

He said he agreed with the Department of Health's policy to crack down on misleading advertising of food supplement products.

The term nutraceutical which combines "nutrition" and "pharmaceutical" was coined to describe a product derived from foods sources that claims to provide extra health benefits aside from its basic nutritional value.

Unlike medicines, food supplements are not subject to stringent testing and regulations. While their packaging contains a disclaimer, or statement of warning, "No approved therapeutic claims," they are heavily advertised usually using celebrity endorsers.

At a news briefing at the sidelines of the third forum of the multi-sectoral Medicines Transparency Alliance Philippines (MAP) for chairs, Bengzon said the latest estimates on health spending placed the amount between P130 billion to P150 billion a year.

"Less than half are spent on medicines that are truly effective. More than half are spent on products whose effects you can get in some other way," he said.

He singled out vitamin supplements which are technically labeled as food supplements.

"By and large people who are healthy and have access to good food do not need vitamin supplements at all. But there's a great deal of Vitamin C going on in this country because people are convinced that it can prevent them from cough, colds, cancers and bad marriages," said Bengzon.

"I agree there's a need to assess how this 'unconventials' play important impact on health, not just the amount of money involved but the way they are advertised. We don't know the impact on shaping people's minds about their attitude to health," he added.

Robert Chipkin, executive director of MAP, which aims to make medicines accessible, also took issue with how food supplements are advertised to prevent or treat diseases and disorders.

"Then after seeing all these things, they flash the warning, 'No approved therapeutic claims.' They are useless products, beats the medical examination they're selling billions," he said.

Senate passes immigration act of 2009

THE SENATE HAS APPROVED ON THIRD and final reading the Philippine Immigration Act of 2009, which would give the bureau of Immigration a major role in economic development.

Immigration Commissioner Marcelino Libanan was on hand to witness the event. He was personally congratulated by Senate President Juan Ponce Enrile and the other senators.

The bill will be committed to the House of Representatives for concurrence. If ever the House adopts the Senate version of the bill, there is no need for a conference committee and the measure will be transmitted to Malacañang for President Arroyo's approval, the agency said in a press statement.

Author, sponsors of the bureau called on the Senate to prioritize the passage of the bill, saying it would bolster their ranks and make the agency in step with the changing times.

On Monday, more than 100 employees of the agency went to the Senate in a show of force in support of the bill.

Miriam assails Palace splurging on GMA ads

By Michael Lim Ubac

SEN. MIRIAM DEFENSOR SANTIAGO YESterday branded as "irregular and unnecessary" the use of taxpayers' money to advertise the legacy of the Arroyo presidency.

Interviewed by reporters, Santiago said that President Macapagal-Arroyo had many opportunities to advertise her accomplishments as chief executive for seven-to-nine years.

"It's not only irregular, but unnecessary because the President has many opportunities to list down her achievements, agency by agency," said Santiago.

She said the surveys, where she believes her State of the Nation speeches, "she can make it part of her speech for that year."

"If what the media is certain interest groups in society, then she can make a pitch for the achievements of that particular agency over that particular interest group. But to spend public money for these kinds of advertisements must be pursuant to be effects set by the Commission on Audit (COA)," said the senator.

Santiago reminded Secretary Cesar Lanuevo, head of the Philippine Information Agency to review COA circulars on disbursements of public funds.

Santiago said COA had issued a circular that listed several requirements to be met before the advertisement would be considered legitimate expense of public funds.

"No. 1, the expense should not be irregular or unnecessary or excessive or extravagant. No. 2, it should be information that the public needs to know. No. 3, the information should be presented to the functions of the agency," said Santiago.

Finally, she said the agency should have a budget for that particular purpose of propaganda or publicity.

"The agency cannot just draw funds from other line items and divert it for the purpose of publicity," she said.

Arroyo's former socioeconomic planning secretary Ralph Recto claimed that the government had spent P2 billion in the last 2 years for state ads, nearly infomercials of Cabinet men running in this year's election.

Recto said this was based on a COA report the national government robbed at least P612 million for advertising to print, radio and TV in 2008 or nearly double the previous year's level.

Malacañang has budgeted P638 million in ad spending for this year which Recto said it would be more considering the soaring election and the minister's ads being rolled out at the start of this year as Presidential Aspirin joined in the ad catch for numerous ads extolling her accomplishments during her term. With reports from Ed Cabuenagan and Alyn Guanzon

SC nullifies Congress seat for Maldos

By Norman Bordadora

THE SUPREME COURT HAS nullified a law giving Malolos City in Bulacan a seat in the House of Representatives.

The high tribunal, in a close 7-6 vote, declared unconstitutional Republic Act 9591 that created the lone congressional district of Malolos City nonetheless stated it voided the constitutional requirement for an area to have a population of at least 250,000 to entitle it to representation in the House.

"There is no showing in the present case that the City of Malolos has attained or will attain a population of 250,000, whether actual or projected, before the May 10, 2010 elections," the Court ruled in a decision penned by Senior Associate Justice Antonio Carpio.

Malolos will remain part of Bulacan's first congressional district, together with the towns of Bulacan, Pandi, Calumpit, Paliwas and Pulilan.

The controversial bill was sponsored by Sen. Benigno Aquino III in the Senate and by Bulacan Rep. Maria Victoria Sy-Alvarado in the House, basically Aquino had opposed the creation of another congressional district in Cabanatuan City, which was purportedly to accommodate Rep. Eddie Alvarado, son of President Macapagal-Arroyo.

Nograles hit for stalling on solon's oath

CELESTINO MARTINEZ III, RECENTLY DECLARED the rightful winner of the congressional seat for the 4th district of Cebu, cried foul yesterday over Speaker Prospero Nograles' refusal to swear him into office.

Martinez, a Liberal Party member, told reporters that Nograles had initially promised to schedule his oathtaking on Monday but suddenly changed his mind.

Declared the winner over Bonifer Subingsubing, a member of the administration's Lakas Kampi party, Martinez said he was informed that Nograles had a stomach flu on Monday and was not arrested on Tuesday.

Nograles yesterday explained that he decided not to implement the Supreme Court's ruling because the Office of the Solicitor General has a pending motion for reconsideration of the case.

"It is our legal position that we should wait for the Supreme Court to act on the OSG's motion before taking any action on this matter," Nograles said in a text message.

He also said he had no problem implementing the high court's ruling but he respects the procedure cleared first.

Martinez suspects deliberate delaying tactics. He said the OSG, at the start of the case had said it would waive its right to participate, saying both parties were equipped to argue the case.

He said he was surprised to hear that the OSG informed Nograles that it was filing a motion with the Supreme Court with regard to the case.

Martinez still hopes his oath will be administered this week.

Congress is set to adjourn next week for the official start of the campaign period for the May 10 polls.

"This case has been pending for almost two years. People have been waiting, my supporters have been waiting," he said.

According to Martinez, he actually took his oath in Nograles' office last week, although this was not valid because he has to be sworn in at the plenary. The colonel said oath taking was made for the sake of his family, who had flown to Manila.

Martinez is running for Cebu representative again in the 2010 polls.

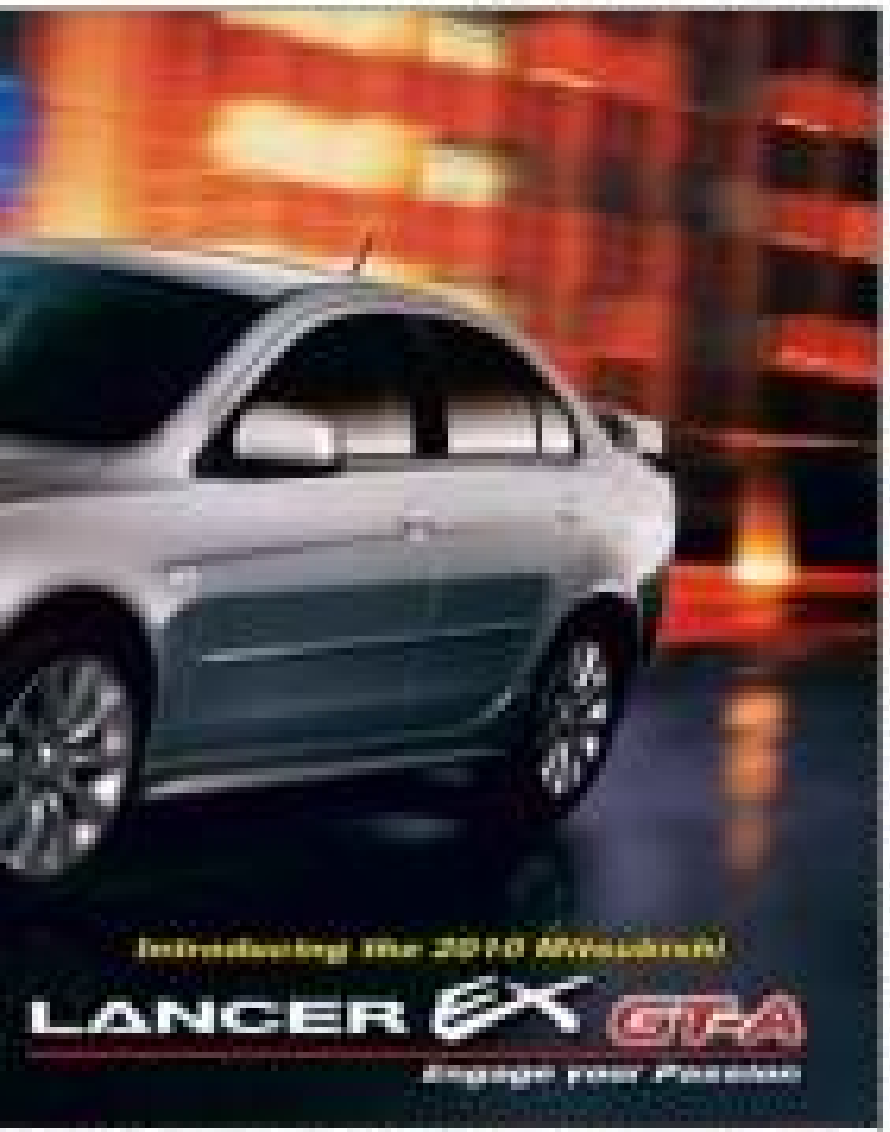
Emilio B. Gonzalez III

Carpio seeks SC job but won't take it from GMA

DepEd education reform campaign launched

UN not releasing bodies of 3 RP soldiers

Parents lose



PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

OPINION

Right to know, now

THE SENATE HAS AN OPPORTUNITY TO BEGIN TO redeem itself from the squalid squabbling of the last few days. It can join the House of Representatives in passing a real landmark law: the Freedom of Information Act. There lurkies shape the historic opportunity.

First, personalities from different sides of the C-5 issue had voted for Senate Bill 3360, the Senate version of the proposed law. (For the record, 12 senators voted yes last Dec. 14, including Senate President Juan Ponce Enrile and Senate Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel Jr., and Senators Jinggoy Ejercito-Estrada and Benigno Aquino III. Sen. Miriam Defiar is also listed as one of the bill's sponsors.)

EDITORIAL

Second, the Senate has appointed three senators to the bicameral conference committee, to parley with the eight representatives from the House. But the negotiators enjoy one singular advantage: two congressmen active in the passage of the House version, Reps. Lorenzo Tañada III and Joel Villanueva, have already recommended that the House adopt the Senate version in full, as being in fact based on the original House bill.

Third, Congress has only three session days left, before it adjourns for the election period. The deadline may be daunting, but we think that it may in fact embolden the bicameral committee, and then both chambers, to expedite the approval process. Both chambers are essentially in agreement on the main lines of argument, so it would be a great pity if, having come so close to the finish line, their efforts peter out in the end.

The proposed Freedom of Information Act gives flesh and blood, a full generation after the 1987 Constitution was ratified, to two fundamental guarantees: the "right of the people to information on matters of public concern" (Article III, Section 7) and the government policy of "full public disclosure of all its transactions involving public interest" (Article II, Section 28).

The proposed law's effect is substantive, a "teeth" to host the twin constitutional guarantees, that is definitely hale, even robust. Indeed, it advances the people's right to know by specifying (in Section 5 of the Senate bill) "a legal presumption in favor of access to information. Accordingly, government agencies shall have the burden of proof of showing by clear and convincing evidence that the information requested is exempted from disclosure." This, we believe, is a true breakthrough.

The law can be improved, of course. In Section 12 of the Senate bill, for instance, we read: "For the effective implementation of this Act, every government agency shall prepare a Freedom of Information Manual, which shall include" a total of 12 elements. Impressive, detailed work. But we note the lack of a deadline—a period of six months after passage of the proposed law's implementing rules and regulations seems reasonable—that will force government agencies to comply with the very letter, not merely the spirit, of the law.

But weighed against the background of the other-to-tremulous political hurdles of the post-Garci era, which often involved the question of access to critical information, the proposed Freedom of Information Act can only be welcome.

The proposed law (again, as seen through the prism of the Senate version) specifies the necessary exemptions to full disclosure. Section 7 lists a total of nine categories where "access to information may be denied," including three situations where "revelation of the information requested will create a clear and present danger of war" or when the "information requested is obtained by any executive of either House of Congress in executive session." (The controversial doctrine of executive privilege, we are happy to note, receives no reinforcement from the proposed law.)

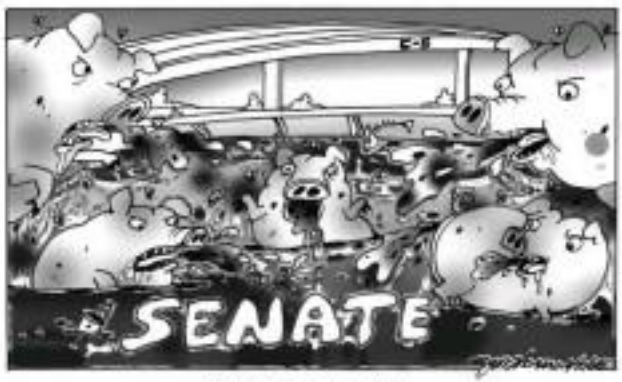
True to its principle of a legal presumption in favor of access to information, the proposed law also specifies three "qualifications" that may override the listed exemptions: the first and the third, in particular, deserve greater notice. An exemption may not obtain when the "information requested may be reasonably severed from the body of the information which would be subject to the exemption" (this would have proven useful in the MIG-27E controversy); or when the "requesting party is either House of Congress, or any of its Committees, unless the disclosure will constitute a violation of the Constitution."

History awaits.

Publisher Isaac Tanny
Editor in Chief Letty Jimenez-Magsanoc
Managing Editor Joe Ma. D. Nolasco
Associate Editor Margarita E. Blanco
Assistant Editor for Readership Rosalie R. Torres-Lopez
Opinion Editor Juan V. Mercado
News Editor Antonio T. Enriquez Jr. • Chief, Page One Operations Nelly E. Pulgar
Chief, News Desk Cecilia R. Alcantara
Assistant Photography Editor Ramon Jr. Velasco
Senior Desk Editor Jean F. Domingo Uy
Editor in Consultant Augusto Dimasuay
Chief Photographer Ernie E. Sarmiento
Art & Design Director Ignet A. Valencia

Board of Directors Raissa R. Prieto
President Alexander Poeto-Romualdez
Senior Vice President for Sales and Marketing Rosario E. Romero
Vice President for Advertising Pilar R. Olaguer
Vice President for Sales and Revenue Gary G. Lim
Vice President for Finance Jose H. Valencia
Advertising Director Manuel Andrew R. Chanyungco
AVP for Marketing Josefina E. Rodriguez
Corporate Affairs Manager Edward R. Malasaga

All rights reserved. Except as permitted under the Copyright Act of the Philippines, no part of this publication may be reproduced or distributed in any form or by any means, or stored in a database or retrieval system, without the prior written permission of the publisher.



Worm's eye view

VIEWPOINT

Juan L. Mercado

FROM A HOMILY FOR VENN. ISAIAH 66:21. Bishop Gaudencio Cardinal Rosales is right. Over 3,000 priests seeking absolution in confession at the Second National Congress of the Clergy was "historical."

NCCP responded to Pope Benedict XVI's call to mark the "Year for Priests." Five out of every seven priests in the country converged at the World Trade Center. They represent 86 dioceses and 36 religious congregations.

The cardinal of darn daily work outside the Pinoy complex are stark. "The phenomenon of hurting churches is actually misleading," says the Jesuit magazine Mindanews. "Contrary to popular belief, we are no longer the untouched believers we are reputed to be."

A shortage of priests and impoverished parishes are one aspect. The late Redemptorist Fr. Luis Meilaender often recalled the words of migrant worker in Europe who asked: "Padre, may Dios bida ang Katolikan? (Father, is there a God in this world)" ?

"She was trying to reconcile her faith in a good, loving Father with her situation of poverty," he said. "For people like her, poverty is not merely a sociological problem. It poses a question about God. . . A Church that reinforces the rights of the poor spells the death of persecution" (Jesus the Christ).

A survey of 1,300 urban students written by Ces Drilon's 3.0 asserts: "Their doctrinal foundation and catechetical instruction seem to be failing." Only 13 percent of young Catholics hear Sunday Mass.

The majority (84 percent) of urban students believe in "supreme being, rather concept by the Philippine Jesuits and the Center Ateneo found. Only a minority (31 percent) believe in life after the grave. And 33 percent were incarcerated in their faith by parents.

"The (urban) seems about a week, says 7 to 22. But less for the others," Hernando Florida University professor Bienvenido Nebres, S.J noted. "They have little sense of right or wrong, only a concern for getting caught or not getting caught."

"The Catholic faith in the Philippines is in a state of pre-crisis," Windhover noted. But catechetical programs are improving. A quarter of respondents (24 percent) are taught by homilies. Small basic ecclesial communities windows "witnessing by the lay faithful."

What about the worries one view three? Hours birth and wedding to burial, people interact with priests in the parishes. Here's one man's pieces.

"I never told this story where she was alive," Fr. JJ said at our 46-year-old mother's funeral Mass. Midway through his studies, their instructor fr. wavered. A gifted musician, he set his eyes on becoming an entertainer. "I didn't pick variety schedule check."

"You have a vision" the helper told it one morning.

"It was our mother. And she came straight to the point: 'Do you or don't you want to be a priest?'"

Stunned, JJ hibernated: "I do. I do."

"Then, pick up your check," his mother told him. And of course.

"If I knew she was coming, I'd have rescheduled my sessions," Fr. JJ recalled. "Instead, I was astounded. The incident made me think hard. It proved to be my turning point."

Fr. M tells of his dad's funeral rites for our two younger brothers: "At this time, you will bring no social graces," the wife and I pulled him.

It was one in her. Fr. B has been stricken by a brain tumor.

Perhaps, one of our other "priest nuns" will do that homily? Those who have not indulged our children, friends, nephews, nieces, to support to the seminary. We have 20 of them today.

The 21st will be ordained to Calbayog on Feb. 25. Two from Tagbilaran, four from Tarlac, and one from Cebu have completed their studies. They now wait in the wings.

We have outlived with 63 seminarians in half a century. Half dropped out along the way. Some opted for other callings. Others couldn't hack the academics or the denial of self giving. A generous, two days before ordination, shot dense another.

Their temperaments, strengths, even frailties differ. "But it was the same voice that called them," writes Carlos Valles, S.J. "It is a world that has been transformed. Christ and God . . . (calls them) to be an image, a soldier, a pledge of what life in the Father's house is like."

They come from varied backgrounds: musician, teacher, salesman, farmer, accountant, tiller. Fr. E was ordained, a mature carefully swapped. "He was just a messenger. I deserve it."

Yet ordained-ordained. "Brief and the son of Zebedee were fellow seminary."

Over the years, these men tell us of their problems—successes—and frustrations. In his unpretentious upland parish, Fr. M sends three buses by motorcycle and bonding, to reach the farthest communities off dirt-road students. "After I pay off parish debts, my balance for food is P28."

JC (I get an out-of-the-way posting. "I realized hard," he said. "But I am bound by celibacy."

"My thrust is to build basic Christian communities among small farmers," Fr. Ivanne. "Vatican under surveillance and suspected by the military as an NPA. They try hard to destroy those communities. Brother against brother. Filipino against Filipino. I hope this will end someday. Brothers!"

The example they are—or fail to are—is crucial. Seminarian Abbie was in first year theology. He entered the seminary because of a midnight motorcycle ride with Fr. A. Despite the ruts, they dozer to a barangay 18 kilometers away. There, Fr. A anointed a dying parents. "This stirred in him a desire to imitate his priest."

"Forever with clothes" was how Pope John Paul II titled his letter on priests. "Behold: I give you shepherds." That is what NCCP is all about.

(Email: jmercado@email.com)

Ounce of prevention

THE CATHOLIC BISHOPS' CONFERENCE OF the Philippines has been ineffectively alarmed in terms a pastoral letter on it. But a the failure of election the May exercise seems headed towards—or engineered for.

The bishops issued their statement just hours after Comelec Chair Sixto Brillo dismissed the calls by Congress to prepare for contingency measures in such an event. Said Brillo: "The automatic of no preliminaries, the nationwide failure of elections—those are just speculative projections. These apprehensions are not helping."

The CBCP countered: "Many serious questions about the reliability and integrity of the equipment and the personnel involved have not been satisfactorily answered. We must make sure that these are prepared before a positive that can be legally adopted when there are some glitches in the system and in the logistics. We have to be vigilant and be involved."

Other developments: Atty. Lupus, Carlos Padilla and Silvio Jones have proposed that in the event of a failure of election, the incumbent members of Congress retain their positions in a holdover capacity. Jones Power Ferdie is being asked to resign as Senate president, since that is next in the president and vice president in the line of succession, which would throw him to Malacañang if those posts are vacated. Arbitrary constitutional changes on whether GMA has the power to appoint Supreme Court's successor as chief justice.

Doubtless there's so much of things to suggest, or connect, to solve a problem like the Comelec. This is a country of lawyers after all, which is why we have no law at all, but that's another story. All that however is an exercise in futility if not impolite, because there is a simple solution to all this, one that has been there all this time, and one that advocates the magnificent wisdom that an ounce of prevention is a pound of cure. The best way to combat massive cheating is to prevent it from happening in the first place.

That is by having an open electoral system.

The choice—a point that may never be made, surely hallowed—is not between automated elections and manual elections. The choice is between one form of automation and another. Or more specifically, the choice is between transparent automation and secret automation.

The preferred mode of automation of the Comelec is secret automation. That is what fundamentally represents. You have no idea what its machinations will do. You have to take it to on faith that those institutions, whose software is known only to its makers, will count the votes right. It's a thoroughly unsplayed faith in a country whose history, notably of the last nine years, shows that anything that can be used to cheat will be used to cheat.

My suspicion all this runs to those groups making plans to clearly monitor the counting to. What on earth can you monitor? This is a system where the voter fills up the form and slides it into the machine? Nothing. Once there, nothing is running on faith while it's running its course.

The problem is not the distribution of ballots getting confused, the voters getting confused, the vote being getting confused, the public getting confused. The problem is the machines not getting confused. If they produce a result that defies expectations, who can say cheating happened? Like I said the last time around, it's all very well that Social Weather Stations has determined that the public will not issue a failure of elections during down but will mount People Power in protest, but how will they say that a failure of elections has happened?

Some of that is there in encrypted electoral systems. The specifics are proposed by the IT community of this country vesting of this forum

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

the manual voting and tallying and automate the canvassing. The first takes only a year one-and-half days. The manual voting/tallying can be monitored. The results are written on blackboards open to public view, and can be photographed and published. Then for the hackers outside the results using a well-known software like Excel and make the results available by internet, thereby allowing anyone and everyone to follow it. The canvassing can be monitored as well. All it takes is to compare the tally on the blackboards with the tally on the Internet.

The system is simple. Or requires no training, other than installation with Excel), it is cheap in to a small fraction of Smartmatic's price tag), and it is honest. It can be monitored from start to finish. Why the Comelec won't even consider it is a mystery. What that institution is not the case, is to be diverse.

The solution is a no brainer. It is not to go in to all sorts of constitutional looking for ways to neutralize the cheating that it expected from the Comelec's canvass, it is not to find ways, legal or moral, to bribe or bully it into doing the problem of inconvenience to the event of a failure of elections. You do those things only when you have no choice, when you are compelled to accept a lesser evil and have to settle only for finding ways to mitigate its hurts. In this case, it is not necessary to do that. The Comelec is not in a lesser evil, it is that there is an alternative, nothing in the strings that is an absolute good.

It is by no means less to implement it. All it takes is for the public, led by the honorable CJ of the Chief Justice, the schools, the businesses, communities, the media, the mass and persons, the businesses and ordinary folk—to shout the false forces—to take to the streets, by and or signatures, and compel the Comelec to adopt it. Scrap Smartmatic and order the computers to give back to advance 100 things Pacific Corp. and Hewlett-Packard. And put in Open Electoral System in place. We do that and we won't have a failure of elections.

The adage is right: Prevention only takes an ounce while the cure is pound.

Times that try men's souls

REACTING TO YESTERDAY'S HEADLINE ABOUT Senate President Aquilino "Koko" Pimentel's claim that Sen. Manny Villar tried in his time to get money on the investigation of the U.S. project, some observers asked, not without some humor, just how much more can make billionaire brother and billionaire? It's no secret that the Senate President is perhaps as rich as Villar, or, assuming for now is true, is wealthier than enough money for now being hailed richly, and the possible. Probably till. Is the Senate President who keeps his income tax?

But what Arroyo's argument in his privilege speech, at, that Villar's P200-million budget intervention to U.S.-run diamond and approval of four different stages, was convincing to many listeners. Arroyo stressed that the senator was the one who forced the Senate to examine where almost all the senators were members, then not to the plenary, the bicameral conference committee and finally back to the Senate floor for ratification. At every step of the way, said Arroyo, the disputed item was approved. Thus, if Villar was guilty, so were the other senators.

The U.S. house has been beaten to a pulp in the past two years, and the only question now is, how far the other shoe will drop. In this case, Malaysian College president, opines that the issue could not be both ways: damage Villar or create tremendous public sympathy for him. But public interest may quickly move from this issue, or Villar's ally, Sen. Cynthia Villar, assumes, revealed a controversy that still doubtless far far more interesting, especially since the rival Liberal Party is campaigning on the theme of good vs. evil. Basically, aside about the overpricing of 911 kilometers of the Subic-Clark railway line, Arroyo claims allegedly played in getting the government to construct an interchange connection to Luisita from the Subic-Clark Subic Expressway. BUTTES for Roy, who's another ally competitor in the South Expressway, had to pay hundreds of millions for each right of way. The deal was cut in 2004, when the Aquinos were still good friends with the administration. President Gloria Arroyo broke away from GMA in

Political Tidbits

Belinda Olivares-Cassayan

July 2005). Rumors from the NP campaign says it will build up a case showing how Noynoy tried to score up a congressional investigation in 2008, into Luisita's overpricing, with it no vague acquisition of farmers to some colleagues.

There's a chance for the Senate to address the outrageousness of a temporary income in the country's top leadership in case of a collapse of the automated elections and Congress' inability to proclaim the newly elected president and vice president by June 30. The latest to weigh in are the Bayanes, which proposed that both the Senate majority and minority form a so-called "provisional government" that the President Juan Ponce Enrile, who is running for reelection, would be returned to the post, assuming he wins in May. The Bayanes solicited elements suggested this so that both sides were history holed in partisan issues, would come together and elect the leaders who will remain in office beyond May 10 and succeed as official No. 3, as dictated by the Constitution in case of vacancy in the top two administrations.

The reaction from some senators was not encouraging. Enrile opined that it is the majority that elected him in November 2016 that should decide the issue of his standing, and not the minority. He also wants to address this contingency by having the senate leaders come together after the election, in case automated election fails.

Enrile's stance could not more logic. The election of a new Senate leader who is not running for reelection ought to be addressed by all the senators, not just the majority, and the fact that

is now, before a contingency occurs and while people can think clearly and having leaders after the elections may be difficult as they could all be torn by partisan strife by then. Postponing the selection of a new Senate chief could be a bonus for the Bayanes which could invite military adventurism.

Holding a new Senate election after Enrile steps down calls for tremendous sacrifice and enormous ability from him. But there are times that require such a leader. The Senate President also being selected for prudence and wisdom the gravity of this contingency. It's not, as has, Miriam Santiago, namely he got Enrile out of the way in order to avenge the alleged Villar corruption charge under the rug.

Two important events coming up:

Behooveably, the Catholic ministry devoted to helping save troubled marriages, offers a special Valentine's weekend for couples seeking reconciliation from estrangement, or deeper understanding of their problems. The Catholic ministry, which has helped a long time and proven to many marriages around the country, will hold the healing weekend from Feb. 15 to 17 at the Shrine of Mary Queen of Peace, Feb. 14, at the Shrine of Mercy Spiritual Center along NAIA Road in country Tagaytay City for more details, call Columbus by Jhon's Day 0918-9624851 or 0920-9624851, or Jhon's 918-9771 and 0920-9624851 or 0918-3911 and 0918-9323-2973. Breast 683-3736 or 0918-391-4682. All calls will be held in strictest confidence.

An interesting house titled "Woman Inspiring Change" will be held next Saturday, Feb. 9, from 11:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the Ayala Museum, 5th Level, Greenbelt 3, Ayala Triangle, Ayala Ave. City. The speakers will be Tuba Gran Ramona, president of Center for Aesthetic Studies; Anabelle Tellano, one of Marcos Martial Law's "Inspiring Women" and Vanessa Hidalgo, noted attorney and novelist. Ryan is for a P200 and student fee is P75, inclusive of meals. For information, call Hans 0919.598.0839 or 433.0828, or Tanghee 372.4300 loc 10 and look for Mimi or Ang.

When 5,000 priests gather

STARTING MONDAY AND UNTIL TOMORROW, Friday, some 5,000 Catholic priests, both diocesan and religious, from all over the Philippines are clustered in the World Trade Center (WTC) in Pasay City for the Second National Congress of the Clergy (NCC II). They are on a spiritual retreat.

Theme of the congress is "Priests and the Synodal Dialogue Just vowed," joint conference, Guidance Cardinal Rosales stated this plainly:

People who are into current progressive energy are touchy, angry and even violent if they don't or doubt it matter this gathering so highly and divisive charged. Even whatever spiritual it address or might in the universe you may look at it.

For me, it also conjures awesome comments: images, the magnificent beings of the heaven gathered and chant in praises and endless pulsating energy and resonance beauty. Life and the cosmos was prepared you like.

But these priests are just ordinary men, you might say, men with lots of clay.

Early in his papacy, Pope John Paul II explained his own priestly vocation thus: "I am often asked, especially by young people, why I became a priest... And one is by friends. I could answer that by saying that it is impossible to explain entirely for it to mean a mystery, even to myself. How does one explain the ways of God? We know that, it is true, point to my life, I became convinced that Christ was saying to me, 'Follow me!' Christ was saying to me: 'Come, follow me!' There was a door sense that what I heard in my heart was no human voice, nor was it just an idea of my own. Christ was calling me to serve him in a priest."

Many priests can probably tell that I am deeply grateful to God for my vocation to the priesthood. Making means more to me as gives me greater joy than to celebrate Mass each day and to serve God's people in the Church. But has been true every since the first day of my priesthood. The underlying love is so changed this, not even becoming Pope."

Yes, at some point in our lives our experiences or emotions seemingly sometimes painfully or with profound joy, that we must travel a certain

Human Face

Ma. Ceres P. Doyo

path. That's my take.

NCC II is an encounter gathering considering that the 5,000 priests in attendance comprise more than 60 percent of all the priests in the Philippines. (There are about 8,000 in all.) And this is also the second gathering of its kind (the first was in 2004 when 4,000 came).

NCC II was held amid reports of scandals and controversies that wracked the Church in the United States and Europe. But the Philippines also had its share this year: a priest was duly report on this blood on the research findings of the Association of Major Religious Superiors of Women in the Philippines.

NCC II is a learning festival. It is taking place for the second time since 2004 in June 2012 when Pope Benedict XVI declared as "The Year of Priests." The theme of NCC II is "Faithfulness of Christ, Faithfulness of Priests."

NCC II's organizers said the retreat will tackle sexual, personal and financial scandals that have confronted priesthood. The retreat congress includes prayer and liturgy, conferences, group reflections, faith sharing and personal writing. Even without a lot more for eleven-hour self-flagellation hard bonding.

Msgr. Clarence Gallardo, the congress secretary, says the basic objective of the congress is to provide the priests a deep and religious experience that will hopefully lead to a spiritual conversion and greater solidarity. Roman Ambassador to the Vatican Henrietta de Villa, one of the organizers, hopes the priests will fall in love with their vocation all over again.

The spirit of St. John Mary Vianney, popularly known as the Cure d'Ars and patron saint of priests,

is being invoked in a special way this week and his every-inner Rome in Main France to provide inspiration.

Francisco Cardinal Fu Xiaotsi Coadjutorian, preacher to the papal household, has been the main speaker and facilitator these past days. I might be wrong, but I believe he has not yet returned to Rome.

A great addition is the talk today on ecumenism by a woman, Mona Rose of the Focolare Movement, the total over the leadership of the Focolare Movement after the death of Chiara Lubich in March 2008. The charismatic Roman says between Pope of the Seven of him is also a speaker today.

Tomorrow afternoon, the 5,000 priests also think up a pillgo in procession from the WTC to the Cathedral (Immaculate Conception) where the mass will be held. The public is welcome to join the procession there. Needless thousands of priests in procession and concelebrating. That would be an awesome thing to witness.

Even so, with all the graces that come with the vocation, it is not very long a priest. I have written a good number of human stories on individual priests, most of them killed in action. One was about a priest named robert video dead in a field of white rice harvested. A priest in Caroline was killed while out to seek the lost shotgun in the dead of night. He must have known too much about drug syndicate.

And there were those who died of natural causes and whose lives were given to the sick, like Abrad Bendijo, Fr. Carlos Abrantes and Redemptorist Fr. Louie Hechanova, both great writers and many, many priests and men of action whose hearts beat with for the poor, and whom I knew well when they were alive.

I had told a friend to quote from Thomas Merton, "But she'll love her home Let go to God" for in Heaven I have already arrived."

Sent feedback to e-mail@gmail.com

Villar's impeachment

ESSENTIALLY TRUE IS HOW I HAVE ALWAYS viewed Senate President Aquilino "Koko" Pimentel Manuel Villar Jr. is trying to dodge an impeachment. Senators in many ways can do as they please while in office, with the only real check and balance on their behavior being their fellow senators, or they can go against political self-interest by demanding the imprisonment even for opponents.

There was the case of Sen. Alejo Mariano who shot his bodyguard to the minority Democrats. He was elected senator in 1931 and re-elected in 1934 and in 1922, but an electoral protest was filed. The Senate Electoral Tribunal, operating purely on the basis of the Incumbent majority (at the time, senators didn't sit in eleven of tribunals as a bid to the majority), declared Mariano the winner. Sen. Arturo Dandoy, then in the midst of a seven bout of tuberculosis, had himself brought to the Senate in a stretcher to demand justice for a political opponent. It's an outrage that subsequently Malolos, the Senate Electoral Tribunal, serving to the post-war years.

Even when Pharmacists Senator Ramon Bagatsing, Jose Diwa and Jose Romero were denied their seats by the Liberals in 1946, the Senate had jurisdiction over the case. Bagatsing, Diwa and Romero took their case to the Supreme Court, which reinstated them. But they didn't deny the jurisdiction of the Senate just as the Senate accepted the jurisdiction of the Supreme Court.

In the Senate, the members can make speeches without fear of reprisal, on the hard-won legislative principle that an elected representative must be accorded every opportunity to act in the collective, public interest. The only limit on this kind of democratic freedom is that other legislators in their other sessions may challenge any of their own, either because of interpolations, or speech, or of their own, or move for their colleagues to be

The Long View

Manuel L. Quezon III

investigated and judged by what is essentially a jury of their peers.

It is the same logic that puts the two of us on pain bail president of the Senate court composed of the only real peers of the respondent, those who were elected by the same national constituency. In the case of a president's impeachment, the only way it check and balances on the Senate is that the whole thing plays out in full public view, where partisanship can be pursued, but at the risk of losing one's credibility should one be seen to be acting in bad faith.

The fundamentally political aspect of all this is hardly allowed to play out because when it is time, whether for a president being prosecuted by the House and upon whom the Senate is tasked to sit in judgment, or a congressman or senator tasked before a committee to investigate the allegations of unethical behavior, to public office. Public office is not an inalienable right, an office obtained by political means can be lost by political means, so long as the votes are observed as gaining or losing that office.

It is not as if life, liberty or even property is at stake. There is no risk of the hangman's noose or a firing squad, no systematic guarantees of imprisonment because only the senate can decide, and no risk of personal property being seized because no legislators exercise that power.

Many Aquino declined to participate in the proceedings of the military tribunal tasked with considering his role in rebellion, on the principle that as a civilian, he could only be judged by his fellow civilians. He felt was to abide and to the hands of the wrong tribunal.

Villar, on the other hand, stands accused before

the proper institution, the one to which he belongs, and which, incidentally, has had a long tradition of insisting that it is the only body that has exclusive jurisdiction to determine the fitness for membership of one of its own—or what internal sanctions ought to be imposed, short of expulsion.

The Constitution also provides that its law-officer acquires extraordinary sanctions: a two-thirds majority to impeach a president or expel a member of Congress it can either chamber. That is the equivalent of the courts requiring proof beyond reasonable doubt for criminal conviction.

For a president, the absence of a two-thirds majority to convict means the failure of an impeachment. For a legislator, the maximum penalty of expulsion requires a similar majority and anything less than that means the member in question is left to see to it that something like censure, and a recommendation that charges be filed and all golden public immunity doesn't hurt. For Villar the prospect of all these obviously dim.

Nor can we discount the challenge of the Senate, in its capacity as a committee of the whole, provide immunities for its critics, it might establish a precedent for future impeachments should he be elected to the presidency. That being the case, how he conducts himself here, so as to avoid being accused by his peers, is a clear indication of how he will conduct himself if he does ever come when he has to face scrutiny by the same institution—this time in his capacity as chairperson.

I have no doubt that Senate President Ripples Enrile, as the first chief executive to undergo impeachment proceedings, responsibly exercised his duties as the charges, operating on public interest first and foremost. But the stakes at the time for him in the process were not as high as they are for Villar.

Enrile was not facing any challenge to the legitimacy of his office to hold but to account. Without even being president, Villar has embroiled me in electoral, and, indeed, public, controversy.

Chance encounters

THERE ARE DAYS WHEN YOU SHOULD SIT IN A QUIET corner of a coffee shop, with the misty steam of freshly brewed coffee filling your senses, and find yourself watching the world pass by through a sheet of glass. More often than not, you would notice strangers appearing from one side of the pane and then crossing the short distance to the other side, never to be seen again. A few go by unnoticed, but there would be times when you find your gaze being drawn to one person and then following that figure until it disappears from sight, without exactly knowing why. Then head another thing was framed by the glass pane, seemingly frozen in time, outside flesh to your memory long after the last drop of coffee disappears from your demitasse.

Unlike the random encounters with strangers throughout our lifetime, the most unexpected of chance encounters present a certain kind of spontaneity, creating an impact unlike any other. Mine happened a year ago, when I tried to endure rides from our cabs out on many summer afternoons, reading a story I was enjoying right before. It was a time when I lacked the confidence to use screens into my own private thoughts. I was waiting in a conversation between myself and my subconscious, the pace at the uninjured dialogue, and reading it as overwhelming into something intimate. That morning with her whispering in my ear.

Soon her scribbles and immediately found that she dozed to interest in reading and writing. She was taking up Creative Writing in UP Diliman, and out of curiosity, she asked if she could see my writings, even from way back when I was an 11-year-old struggling with this vocabulary. When I declined, she pressed on, and I found myself succumbing on the spot.

In our subsequent meetings, I would gaze a sheet of paper to her, and she would scan it and scribble her comments. However summed it was, I enjoyed it immensely. Slowly, I started writing, and at the same time, shedding my inhibitions about writing.

Not surprisingly, we became good friends. I hardly noticed it, but we were soon talking about anything, including personal problems. We exchanged books, and it was because of her that I read Antoine de Saint-Exupery's "The Little Prince" and got introduced to Lewis Carroll's masterpiece.

Our meetings extended to only a few weeks, but it seemed like they went on for a long time. Writing for the changed from something wholly private into something that can be shared. That year, I submitted a piece I had written to my friend's literary publication, and I was pleasantly surprised to see it published. Even when I was in college, where I still submit my kind of writing work, I would always wonder what she would have said about this or that paragraph, and break into a smile.

A chance encounter is like a trip to a coffee shop. You never know what you will see, experience or feel. But there's always the one encounter that will change everything to happen. A glass separates you from the world. But every once in a while, you find yourself reminiscing about someone and you smile as the warm memories return to you, even as the last few drops of coffee settles comfortably in your stomach.

Gail E. Go, 18, is a Chemistry freshman at the Ateneo de Manila University.

Young Blood

Gail E. Go

My mom is from when the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the twenty-something and below.—Ed.

My mom is from when the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the twenty-something and below.—Ed.

Unlike my other encounters with strangers throughout my lifetime, the most unexpected of chance encounters present a certain kind of spontaneity, creating an impact unlike any other. Mine happened a year ago, when I tried to endure rides from our cabs out on many summer afternoons, reading a story I was enjoying right before. It was a time when I lacked the confidence to use screens into my own private thoughts. I was waiting in a conversation between myself and my subconscious, the pace at the uninjured dialogue, and reading it as overwhelming into something intimate. That morning with her whispering in my ear.

Soon her scribbles and immediately found that she dozed to interest in reading and writing. She was taking up Creative Writing in UP Diliman, and out of curiosity, she asked if she could see my writings, even from way back when I was an 11-year-old struggling with this vocabulary. When I declined, she pressed on, and I found myself succumbing on the spot.

In our subsequent meetings, I would gaze a sheet of paper to her, and she would scan it and scribble her comments. However summed it was, I enjoyed it immensely. Slowly, I started writing, and at the same time, shedding my kinds about writing.

Not surprisingly, we became good friends. I hardly noticed it, but we were soon talking about anything, including personal problems. We exchanged books, and it was because of her that I read Antoine de Saint-Exupery's "The Little Prince" and got introduced to Lewis Carroll's masterpiece.

Our meetings extended to only a few weeks, but it seemed like they went on for a long time. Writing for the changed from something wholly private into something that can be shared. That year, I submitted a piece I had written to my friend's literary publication, and I was pleasantly surprised to see it published. Even when I was in college, where I still submit my kind of writing work, I would always wonder what she would have said about this or that paragraph, and break into a smile.

A chance encounter is like a trip to a coffee shop. You never know what you will see, experience or feel. But there's always the one encounter that will change everything to happen. A glass separates you from the world. But every once in a while, you find yourself reminiscing about someone and you smile as the warm memories return to you, even as the last few drops of coffee settles comfortably in your stomach.

Gail E. Go, 18, is a Chemistry freshman at the Ateneo de Manila University.

Sharing Christmas

Raymund Carlos Rapsing

IT WAS A FEW DAYS AFTER CHRISTMAS, AND I HAD JUST arrived home from the city two minutes after sending off my brothers and sisters to Manila. I was excited to convey Grandma's all our Gabby sitting on the doorstep, clutching his new red robot from Santa Claus. He smiled, a toyed sleepy smile, and told me he had been looking for me.

Whenever my friend because he was cuddle mood, barely looking from that room. I maximized to see what the matter had with me. I gave him my father because he loves to play with it, taking on to imaginary track while making his own funny engine noise.

We moved over to our room a stranger's perspective and to dried things were different. The house looked empty and quiet. I sighed. I thought I was going to miss them so much.

I remembered that we had spent the day before packing all the holiday decorations because we wanted to spare our parents the hassle of cleaning up. We store Christmas into by the window with its bulbs, boxed angels, many Christmas balls, falling snowflakes, and the Nativity set. Our tree remaining Christmas lights glowing into Christmas carols.

Like any Filipino family Christmas feast, ours was made classy with decorations you can buy cheap from sidewalk stalls. But I was proud of that old Christmas tree because, like any Filipino family, it was a symbol of unity. Every December, we would put up to family members, including those now working abroad or in other cities to marry. It was built during their marriage, memories when our family gathered to celebrate life and God's blessings.

Now it's all gone, packed away to await the next year.

I asked Gabi if he was still up and he told me, "Where's are supposed to go somewhere?"

I told my son, "No, we don't have anywhere special to go to tonight."

I didn't tell him the reason that all homes were gray through the same clouds as ours, including mine. But gray clouds would soon end it, and return to life as usual. How do you explain that to a four-year-old? How do you tell him there will be no more holidays and merchandise on racks, no more cheese on toast and egg games with screaming cousins, no more fireworks and exchange of gifts, at least until the next year?

Tonight we start a tradition that will be followed by many and synergy and bring home toys and sandals. Tonight we sleep early because I have work in the morning and you have school.

I tucked my sleepy son in bed and wished him good night. He asked if Santa would be bringing him a gift in the morning and I told him no. Santa doesn't do only once a year, otherwise he would get so tired and he would need his sleep.

Before drifting to sleep, he murmured that he loves us, hurting and blamed his kids for giving him all these troubles. I realized how much he's growing up.

I do not know why I write this. Maybe it was because for a while I was so caught up with making the Christmas days end, to my kids that I wanted believing in. Or maybe I felt had to see my little boy having to vanity at the thought that Christmas had come and gone early.

Maybe during the season I grew up my job abroad and came home, so that I remember not only in the uproarious joys of opening gifts at Christmas dinner but also in the deep thoughtful moments of a child trying to understand why the Christmas spirit seemed to be so fleeting.

Raymund Carlos Rapsing, 20, is an online data encoder in a call center based in Cainta and like to play and write short stories in his lack at night.

Censor pornography in Internet

LETTERS

THE CONFLICT BETWEEN Google and China brings up the matter of pornography through the Internet in the Philippines.

Google, the Internet provider, has threatened to exit China in protest against its censorship rules and alleged hacking. The Internet Search government has backed Google, with Secretary of State Hillary Clinton denouncing the alleged restrictive censorship of China. China claims that Google has not observed its laws prohibiting pornography in the Internet.

It is an accepted principle of international law that a nation is sovereign within its borders in observing laws and regulations. It is also a recognized principle that foreigners and foreign business enterprises in a country must observe its laws and regulations.

The Philippines has a law prohibiting and punishing pornography. Article 201 of the Revised Penal Code holds criminally liable those "who, in theaters, fairs, cinematographs or any other place, exhibit indecent or immoral plays, scenes, acts or shows" which "offend any other decent box as satisfy the morbid tastes for lustful, lust or pornography ..." The phrase "or any other place" should cover the Internet web, especially because it "invades" the home.

It is well known that in the Philippines pornographic videos or materials can be viewed just by the click of the browser. Boys and girls, even as young as the seven years old, especially teenagers, are able to access such pornographic videos almost without restraint. This directly undermines public and private morals, tearing apart a basic tenet of our society, not to mention destroying the morality of our youth.

Internet providers, including Google, that fail to censor or bar pornographic shows or materials from the Internet in our country are violating our laws. The officers and operators of these corporations are subject to prosecution according to law. They should be warned to stop the exhibition of pornography and if they fail to do so, their representatives in the country should be criminally charged, and their companies fined.

The failure of our government to enforce the law exposes its weakness. As cyberviolence as real however for those responses in street protests, as foreign. The self-respecting country would allow a foreign person or entity to dictate or flagrantly disobey its laws, especially those involving such an important principle as preserving public morality.

Google claims that some people or interests in China have been hacking its service. China denies it and claims it is also a victim. Let Google present its claim to the proper international court. That is a dispute between the two. But it is certainly unacceptable that a company like Google should decide on the matters it operates in what laws they should obey and enforce within their borders.

As a Filipino citizen, I am demanding that our government secretly enforce its censorship laws against pornography in the Internet to protect our public and private morals.

—MANUEL V. SUMULONG,
mlsdmarin@yahoo.com

Who are the real liars in the Senate?

TO ACCUSE THE 12 SENATORS who signed the report on Sen. Manuel Villar's culpability in the US$ investor project of political investment is a diplomatic attempt at sweeping the issue, and it itself politically incorrect. This is antipatriotic that Filipinos are so stupid as not to see through this ploy is an insult to the people the senators are supposed to represent.

By sending to take up this issue on the Senate floor and dismissing it simply as politics, Sen. Alan Peter Cayetano is in effect calling his 12 colleagues of lying and of being irresponsible and unpatriotic.

And if he and the other senators who signed the "unjustified resolution" on Senator Villar truly believe that Senator Villar has been falsely accused by his colleagues, then it is their moral duty to expose these unworthy senators and prove to the public that they are indeed liars and to assign the most powerful challenge to convince Senator Villar to present himself before the Senate and show the public who are the liars. Presidential candidate Villar cannot save around the bush and keep on defending the country. This is a grave opportunity for him to prove that he is clean and deserves to be our next president.

Senator Cayetano, our support is for the reason why there is so much poverty in our nation, is one you don't desire. You were elected to represent the 80 million Filipinos, not yourself.

As for those two senators who signed both the "unjustified resolution" and the report, whichever group is proven to be lying, they are destined to be in the list of liars.

—A. FRANCISCO,
896 Galanagan St.,
Leida Alabang Village,
Barangay Alabang,
Muntinlupa City

TO SEAT IS TO BELIEVE!

SALE PERIOD: Jan. 27 - 29, 2010

TRAVEL PERIOD: Mar. 1 - May 31, 2010

INTERNATIONAL SEAT SALE

₱999 — Manila to Taipei; Clark to Hong Kong or Macau

₱1,499 — Manila to Guangzhou, Hong Kong or Macau; Cebu to Hong Kong or Singapore; Manila to Ho Chi Minh*

FREE

₱1,999 — Manila to Incheon or Shanghai; Cebu to Busan or Incheon

INTERNATIONAL SEAT SALE

₱1,999 — Manila to Osaka

INTERNATIONAL

₱1,399	Manila to Kota Kinabalu
₱1,899	Cebu to Singapore
₱2,399	Manila to Bangkok or Singapore
₱2,899	Cebu to Bangkok
₱3,399	Manila to Kuala Lumpur
₱3,899	Manila to JOHOR

DOMESTIC

₱688	Manila to Naga or Virac
₱788	Manila to Busuanga, Laoag, San Jose (Mindoro) or Tuguegarao; Cebu to Bacolod, Cagayan de Oro, Dumaguete, Iloilo or Tacloban; Manila to Cagayan de Oro
₱888	Manila to Caticlan (Boracay); Cebu to Siargao
₱988	Manila to Legazpi; Cebu to Butuan
₱1,088	Manila to Bacolod, Coron/Busuanga, Cotabato, Cuyo, Iloilo or Kalibo (Boracay); Cebu to Siargao or Zamboanga
₱1,188	Manila to Dumaguete, Naga, Tacloban or Tuguegarao; Cebu to Davao, Dipolog, Kalibo or Puerto Princesa; Manila to Zamboanga
₱1,288	Manila to Puerto Princesa; Cebu to Cotabato, General Santos, Iloilo (Boracay) or Legazpi; Manila to Iloilo
₱1,988	Manila to Butuan, Cagayan de Oro, Catarman, Davao, Dipolog, General Santos, Ozamiz, Siargao*, Surigao* or Zamboanga

Quoted fares are one-way, confined to availability. Fares are exclusive of government fees and taxes. Fares are non-refundable. Flight changes must be made more than 7 day before date of departure. No Late Fares are available upon booking for guests checking without check-in baggage. Add ₱1,000 to fare upon booking if traveling with check-in baggage. Valid approved name change is allowed at ₱1,000 per ticket. Seats are limited. Other terms and conditions apply and are available online at www.cebupacificair.com. Call (02) 70-20-888 in Manila, (032) 230-88-88 in Cebu or visit the travel agent near you.

CEBU PACIFIC AIR.COM

Cebu Pacific accepts ATM, Internet and over the counter payments through

BDO

Making presidential debates more useful

IN RESPONSE TO RANDY DAVID'S JAN. 14 column, I have a suggestion on how presidential debates can be made more useful. Policy-level interviews on important problems and issues confronting the country can be directed to the presidential aspirants. Each candidate can select which policy alternative he will pursue if he wins the election and justify his choice of the policy alternative.

After the selection of policy alternative with requisite serious analysis, the questions can be given to the candidates ahead of time so that each can prepare his arguments to justify his choice.

I will clarify my suggestion by using the following example. There are two opposing policy alternatives that governments can adopt to address the problem of low farm income and mass poverty in agriculture. These are: 1) the free market policy and 2) the public entity policy.

The free market policy (weak government intervention) is based on the philosophy that government should exercise minimal direct intervention in marketing decisions regarding farm commodities. Proponents of this policy believe that free market prices are the best mechanisms for coordinating supply and demand for farm products and for allocating resources optimally among farmers, traders, processors and other stakeholders in the commodity chain. In pursuit of this policy, government limits its market intervention to projects such as the development of infrastructures, communication systems, product grades and standards, and collection and dissemination of market information. Since the 1980s up to the present, the Philippine government has adopted the free market as the dominant policy for farm and non-farm products.

The public entity policy (strong government intervention) for agriculture is based on the philosophy that food products, especially food, is vital to the survival of society. Commercial farming should be treated like public utilities in order to keep commercial farmers economically soaring and make them reliable suppliers of food and raw materials to manufacturing base to industry and consumers. Among the tools used to implement this policy are: price controls, acreage control, administered prices and monopoly power for producers. Since 1920, developed countries like Australia, Canada and the United States have been implementing the policy for agriculture.

In this example, each of the presidential aspirants can choose and justify during the debates which of the two policy alternatives for agriculture he will pursue if he is elected president. The policy alternative he selects becomes part of his election platform and most likely that of his party.

—EDWARD S. SANDOVAL,
ser_dave@yahoo.com

Extraordinary journalist

PRESS SECRETARY JESSE M. ROBREDO'S life—from reporting the news to being the news himself—is indeed an extraordinary personal achievement and serves as a testament for it is like a messenger becoming the message.

From humble beginnings, he climbed to the top in a media man. He can be likened to the sun rising in the morning, so to speak, for nobody becomes extraordinary just in the evening and nothing like a brief candle goes too soon.

His untimely death reminds us, the living, of William Shakespeare's classic epitaph in *Macbeth*: "Life's but a walking shadow; a poor player that struts and frets his hour upon the stage, and then is heard no more."

—GILES E. ESE JARO,
Sta. Alitas Village,
Bantiad, Cebu City

If you have any complaints, grievances or suggestions about the treatment of news and photos by the Inquirer you may write to us by addressing your letter: Philippine Daily Inquirer, Chino Roces Avenue, corner Sigue and Maceredo Streets, City of Makati or send a fax to Nos. 897-8703, 897-8704, or e-mail reader@inquirer.com.ph

Writers of letters to the editor are requested to include their complete address and telephone or pager number or e-mail address for verification purposes. The Inquirer will not publish any letter unless such information is supplied.

Across the NATION

MARVIN CLEMENT BELLO, Regional Correspondent, Agriculture Reporter, Cagayan de Oro City, Tel. (088) 856-1111, Fax (088) 856-1111, Cell No. (0918) 6211111, E-mail: mbello@inquirer.com.ph

MARVIN CLEMENT BELLO and Peter Jon Valmonte, Regional Correspondents, Davao City, Tel. (082) 221-0000, Fax (082) 221-0000, E-mail: mbello@inquirer.com.ph

VICTOR REYES, Regional Correspondent, Cebu Bldg. Northwest II, cor. J. Osmeña and Gen. Maxilom Aves., Cebu City, Tel. No. (032) 254-0000, Fax No. (032) 254-0000, E-mail: vreyes@inquirer.com.ph

MARK MERCADO, Regional Correspondent, 3rd Floor, Building Corp. Bldg., Cebu City, Tel. No. (032) 254-0000, Fax No. (032) 254-0000, E-mail: mmercado@inquirer.com.ph

Assistant Editor: Tony Burgonio

With tuna ban, 150,000 may lose jobs

DAVAO CITY—AT LEAST 150,000 PEOPLE WHO depend on the tuna industry in General Santos City could end up jobless as a result of a two-year ban on tuna fishing in Western and Central Pacific, a fishing magnate said.

The ban, which was decided upon by the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC), started on Jan. 1 and did not exempt purse seine fishing, which is used by most of the fishermen based in General Santos City.

Martin Tan, president of the Southcoast Fishing Federation and chief executive for ISF Phil., said that the ban would render idle at least 200 fishing boats.

Because of the commissioners decision, apparently prompted by over-fishing of tuna, the Philippine fishing industry has presented a 20 percent drop in tuna supply to the local and world markets.

$180-M industry

The tuna industry in General Santos is valued at $180 million based on national export figures of 400 metric tons.

An offshoot of the US-funded Growth with Equity in Mindanao fund previously announced that 60 percent of the city's annual tuna catch came from foreign waters.

Stanley N. Sorensen, GEM senior fisheries advisor in 2002, said that access to tuna-rich fishing grounds in neighboring countries was important to the tuna industry in General Santos.

"Tuna is responsible for almost $1 billion circulating in the national economy, much of it goes to Mindanao," he had said.

Disturbing

"The one production that [was] in Tuna could well be lost by 30 percent during the first quarter," Tan, who sits on the board of the high seas, will have to look for other fishing grounds to compensate their losses," Tan said.

He said the government could still remedy the situation by forging bilateral agreements with other countries in terms of sharing the country's resources.

Undersecretary Virgilio Luyon, head of the Mindanao Economic Development Council (Medco), said the closure of the high seas area disturbing because it would eventually hurt the economic mobility of Mindanao.

"The closure will not only affect the fishermen but also ancillary businesses related to the canning business. On top of this, the next generation of the local government units concerned will also be hurt," he said.

Luyon also said that if countries, where Filipino fishermen have ventured into, also decided to close their territorial waters, the problem would get worse.

WORKERS process tuna at the General Santos City Fishport Complex. The city's economy is facing a loss from a ban on fishing in the Pacific. —PHILIP C. SALOM

Real motive

Tan earlier said the ban—covering areas parallel to Palau, eastern Papua New Guinea and below Micronesia and near the Solomons Islands—was supposedly to preserve whatever tuna is left in the seas.

But he said he suspected that it was aimed at dislodging the Philippines and other Third World countries from tuna fishing grounds.

"I support big countries in the point of conserving and preserving the remaining marine resources in the seas, wanted to control the international fishing grounds [because there are] fishing grounds are already depleted," Tan said.

He said Mindoro and Batangas countries had all the means to control or take international fishing grounds.

At least 60 percent of international tuna supply comes from the western and central Pacific. —Jody Quiroz, Inquirer Mindanao

NEWSBRIEFS

■ MARIVA RUJA

Man, sis in 60s slain

A BROTHER AND SISTER, both in their 60s, were shot and killed by two men near a public market in Catarman City on Monday, police said on Tuesday.

Supt. Manuel Durosel, city police chief, said Arturo Lapina, 60, and his sister Josie Rayamundo, 68, were shot at a palisay 6 am. when they were attacked by the two men in Barangay Bunga.

Their companions—Arturo's three grandchildren and their cousin—were unhurt, police said.

The victims came from the basketry and fish trade, police said. Durosel said the motive for the killings could be "Heredero" (inheritance). Witnesses identified the suspects, aliases Lorenzo and Armando, a 45-cal. pistol, appeared and shot them.

Jerome Pepito
Inquirer Central Luzon

■ PAMPANGA

41 held for guns

THE CENTRAL Luzon police have netted at least 41 guns from stolen gun ban violators, police said. Supt. Roberto Rivera II Jr., regional police information chief, said arrests of the violators were a huge deal in Bulacan and a policemen and soldier in Nueva Ecija.

Rivera said police have filed 14 cases of illegal possession of firearms.

Charlene Cepeda
Inquirer Central Luzon

■ BATANGAS

'Jueteng' men nabbed

TWO PERSONS were arrested for illegal gambling in an operation conducted by police in Barangay Pinagkaisahan, San Juan town on Tuesday, police said Wednesday.

Senior Supt. Alberto Esquejo, Batangas police chief, said suspects Nicolas Rivadeo, 49, and Lorenzo Mendoza, 32, residents of Barangay Pinagkaisahan, San Juan, were arrested on Tuesday. Seized from the suspects' betting paraphernalia and P575 in cash for lawful evidence.

The two were are now detained at the San Juan police station.

Marvin Enriquez Ando
Inquirer Southern Luzon

■ LAGUNA

Reward to get killers

THE LAGUNA provincial police office on Wednesday offered a P50,000 reward for information that would lead to the arrest of two more suspects that gunned down an employee of the town municipal government and an priest another person over the weekend.

Police had released sketches of the two suspects.

On Jan. 22, Jennette Rasca, 33, secretary of the Association of Barangay Council in Santa Rosa, was shot dead by gunmen in her home.

Marcel Sioco
Inquirer Southern Luzon

■ EVENT

Cultural dialogue

THE ARTS Research and Training Institute in Southern Tagalog Inc. (ARTSI Inc.) will host the first "Sining Makipagkaibigan Sa Iba Ibang Kultura Dialogue" on Feb. 5-6, at the D. L. Ronas Hall, University of the Philippines Los Baños, according to a news release.

Sining Makipagkaibigan, a project of the Lucina Institute received a fee of the National Commission for Culture and the Arts (NCCA), will facilitate dialogue and cultural exchange between the local and foreign artists and cultural practitioners, artists and representatives of indigenous communities.

Groups will come from the Kalinangan of Cordillera, the Kapatiran of Visaya Kalipi, the Mangyan of Mindoro and the Dagupan of Pangasinan, to name the contact Randy Fernando at (0905)5888500 and (0905)2511374.

Radioman's killer draws life sentence

By Jhonnex Napallacan
Inquirer Visayas

CEBU CITY—A MAN FOUND guilty of killing a Pagadian City broadcaster was sentenced on Tuesday to up to 40 years in prison and ordered to pay more than P300,000 to the victim's family.

Judge Jesus Albee of the city's Regional Trial Court Branch 6 sentenced Mohammad "Khalil" Maulana to reclusion perpetua (20-40 years imprisonment) for the murder of Edgar Amoro, a radio station official in 2005.

Maulana was caught in Amoro's dying declaration to his wife, Elizabeth, that it was Maulana who shot Amoro on Feb. 2, 2005.

Amoro, who was a teacher, was shot in front of the Zamboanga del Sur National High School in Pagadian. He was a witness in the killing of another journalist, Edgar Damalerio, in 2004.

Damalerio was managing editor of the Zamboanga Scribe.

Amoro's and Damalerio's cases, as were transferred to this city to secure witnesses.

Relatives testified in court that the battered mentioned to her the name "Maulana" as the one who shot him.

Judge Albee said defense lawyer's failed to discredit the testimony of Elfinda.

Two other witnesses—PO2 Dominic Pandes and village watchman Samuel Fernandez—corroborated Elfinda's testimony and identified Maulana as the murderer.

Relatives and colleagues of Amoro and Damalerio hailed the ruling.

Bar Chairman Abdusalam, head of the Zamboanga del Sur Press Club, said the sentence should be distributed and punished as well.

"Whosoever is behind the murders is over free," said Abdusalam. With a report from Aella S. Alipala, Inquirer Mindanao

ILOILO CREATURE
A performer takes on the appearance of a monster during street dancing competitions in Iloilo City at the height of the Dinagyang Festival. —ARNOLD ALMACEN (INQUIRER)

'Leave a message' was all OFW kin got from bet

ZAMBOANGA CITY—THE FAMILY of migrant worker Jakaria Pawa is desperate to buy ticket to a presidential candidate whose TV advertisements portrayed him as the savior of overseas Filipino workers (OFWs).

That there is sometimes no truth in advertising the family of Pawa realized when they kept calling the phone lines of OFW Helpline, a program accredited to Sen. Manuel Villar, who is now running for president and who projected himself as someone who OFWs can turn to in times of need.

Since it coming out on the Pawa family. A Kuwaiti court has upheld the death sentence on Jakaria for the alleged murder of her employer's 22-year-old daughter in 2008.

Bilar Pawa, Jakaria's elder brother, said out of sheer desperation, the family turned to Villar's program but ended up frustrated, coming in the conclusion that perhaps the presidential candidate and his staff were too busy.

Till after call, the Pawa family got one reply—that of the recorded voice of an operator who kept telling them to just leave a message and wait for a return call.

Bar Pawa, Bilar said, the Pawa family believed the recorded message to obey and what it instructed, entered their urgent appeal for help and waited.

No return call came, however, and this made the Pawa family realize the futility of it.

"Only the operator answers our calls," said Bilar. "We've (and) up say (tell phone) tools calling since last week and nothing was happening."

Bilar said he had been begging Villar could find time to help his sister.

"You pledged to help OFWs in distress," he said.

Jakaria's another brother of Jakaria, said they were hoping the government could save Jakaria's life.

They appealed to President Macapagal-Arroyo to step in. "Try her two children," Jamasi said.

"My sister is not an evil person," said Bilq. Angkat Pawa of the Philippine air force, speaking of Pakaria's brothers. Jake Allpala, Inquirer Mindanao

Live WW2 bomb fisherman's biggest catch

CUMBAYO CITY—THIS 31-year-old fisherman's most memorable catch could also be the biggest of his life—unless he top it next year.

Kaukus Ramos was fishing off the Rio Grande de Mindanao on Monday when his boat struck a hard object as he approached the river banks to rest on his nets overnight.

Ramos thought what the object was and brought it to the city police office, carrying a three-foot-long aerial bomb.

Police said the duty where Ramos scored with his catch.

Colonel Ramos was fishing off the Rio Grande de Mindanao on Monday when his boat struck a hard object as he approached the river banks to rest on his nets overnight.

Ramos thought what the object was and brought it to the city police office, carrying a three-foot-long aerial bomb.

Police said the duty where Ramos scored with his catch.

"I had no intention of playing with it," he said. The bomb, he added, could land in the "wrong hands."

Bomb experts of the Army's 6th Infantry Division checked the bomb and affirmed that it was live.

Ramos appealed to fishermen and residents in areas around the Rio Grande de Mindanao to report any discovery of explosives.

The bomb has been removed over to the Army's bomb experts to be detonated safely.

"There could be more explosives in the river. We appeal to our citizens to be extra careful," said Ramos in a radio interview. Edwin Bermas, dec. Inquirer Mindanao

INQUIRER Southern Luzon

Editor Jun Bandayrel
Bureau Chief Florante C. Solmerano

'Survivor' won't desert Caramoan

By Juan Escandor Jr.
Caramoan, Camarines Sur

AGAIN, "SURVIVOR ISRAEL" WILL RENT THE WHOLE Costa Village Resort, which is owned and operated by the local government, in Barangay Caramoan, Camarines Sur, to film two editions of "Hinarden (Survivor)."

Jimmy Benjamin, production manager, cited "best joint, good people and unique show" as reasons for the comeback and filming three straight times.

Last year, one edition of "Hinarden" was shot and shown until last month on Israeli national television (Channel 10).

This time, the shooting will start on Feb. 20, while filming will end in late May or early June.

The no-celebrity shows will last 40 days and the celebrity edition, 30 days, excluding the 45-day pre-production to prepare equipment, props and sites, according to Benjamin.

Adventure site

Aside from promoting the adventure appeal of the Caramoan Islands throughout Israel, "Hinarden" will employ some 300 Filipino workers to assist the 120 production members, Benjamin said. "Caramoan is a great adventure site ideal to our show," he said.

"Hinarden" has two parts—the "reality" and games to test the participants' skill and survivor instincts. Like castaways on an island, they will be exposed to the elements under very primitive conditions round-the-clock for 40 days.

"Hinarden" is actually the second media outfit of "Survivor" to film their editions on small islands/coves northeast of Caramoan, facing the inland province of Camarines Sur.

The French Survivor, "Koh-Lanta Caramoan," filmed its edition in 2008, followed by media outfits from Israel, Bulgaria and Serbia in 2009. "Koh-Lanta" was shown in Europe to an estimated 12 million viewers.

A top executive of the provincial government, who asked not to be named because negotiations was still ongoing, revealed that "Survivor USA" would also be filmed here next year until 2012. Its production crew searched many areas in the Philippines and found Caramoan the most ideal place for filming because of its unique geographical features and available facilities that meet production standards.

Nieg Villanueva, provincial tourism officer, said Camarines Sur's hosting of "Survivor" had brought in dozens of foreign tourists, making it the most visited destination in the Philippines last year.

Records from the Department of Tourism office in Bicol showed that in the first nine months last year, 1,822,092 visitors came to the province, 206,927 of them foreigners. Americans comprised the biggest number of arrivals, followed by Israelis, British, Australians and Japanese.

Tourism revenues in the region reached more than P1 billion, of which P700 million came from Camarines Sur.

Protected area

Caramoan's variety of seascapes and unique rules to the adventurous spirit, said Jose Villareal, recreational officer of Costa Village. The resort is inside a 4,000-hectare national park being managed by the provincial government as agreed upon with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources.

Half of the area is preserved and being developed for ecotourism, Villareal said.

The park has many completed sites, such as small tiny lakes, subterranean water passages and underwater caves in the small limestone islands. Sites are scanned operationally and maps by plants and weed trees, and offer narrow beaches and caves accessible by boat or kayak, he said.

On the fringes are towering limestone walls suitable for rock climbing.

Geologic configuration

The primary attraction is the scenic view of a unique geologic configuration in the middle of a wide coastal marine environment.

Caramoan exhibits the so-called karst topography according to a 1981 study of the Bureau of Mines and Geosciences. This means a landscape defined by a varied formation of limestone cliffs created through geologic processes.

"So for the "Survivor" production coming back, they must be profiting from the resources here that draw television viewers to their shows," said Baptil Peñares, the resort's manager.

A BAT takes flight as a tourist navigates the subterranean river of Manddikon in Caramoan, Camarines Sur. (PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER)

WATER LILIES

Laguna evacuees see revenue from rubbish

By Marlouz Cinco
Bihan, Laguna

WATER LILIES USED TO float on the edges of the Laguna de Bay but flood spawned by Tropical Storm "Ondoy" last year brought the plants to the streets and houses of lakeside communities in Laguna.

"Then were so many of them clinging to our house and clogging the sewers," said Flore Rosales, who evacuated when Barangay Malabanan in Bihan town went underwater.

When the flood began receding, the plants appeared again. This time, however, the residents did not rediscover rubbish but revenue from a strange new material for woven sandals, baskets, bags, accessories and other household items.

A three-day training sponsored by the Department of Trade and Industry at a temporary shelter inside the Sta. Rosa-Tagaytay public cemetery in Barangay San Antonio enabled a first batch of 15 evacuees to learn weaving and create dozens of bayong out of water lilies.

They were expected to teach the skill to other women coming from Barangays Malabanan and Dela Paz, which were hardest hit by the flood. A total of 471 families from the two villages have been staying in the evacuation center inside the cemetery.

Sandal maker

One of the trainees, Ising Nas, 56, used to make shoes and slippers in Malabon, known in Bihan as a footwear capital. She lost her business when Ondoy came in September and brought flood that washed away 10 sacks of her wooden sandals, along with her clothes and appliances.

After attending the DTI sessions, Nas surfaced hope that water lily weaving will replace her losses.

"They (trainers) were surprised [to find out that] it just took us three days to learn how to weave the sandals. Probably because we were already used to making shoes," she said.

Instead of fabric for the footwear, Nas used woven water lily mat for the sandals. She also braided the water lilies for the straps.

Some men joined the production as "supahgood" or those who glue the soles and straps together for the finishing steps.

Other women weave the water lilies into floor baskets, table mats, hats and flower vases.

Buying market

Bihan Councilor Gay Alafiz, who supervised the training, said the DTI representatives took samples of the weavers' products to find a market.

If the water lily industry booms, he said, this could create jobs for the men in gather water lilies.

In other towns, a half meter stalk of water lily is sold for 50 centavos. Its flower and leaves, however, are discarded.

After the training, Macliit said some evacuees had started collecting water lilies from the flood and dried them up in the evacuation center.

"There was a group of Filipinos from Nigeria [how Filipinos who thought of giving P150,000 cash for the evacuees. But we encouraged them that instead of giving dolos, why not buy the water lily products of the evacuees," he said.

The families are allowed to stay at the evacuation center only until May, by which time the flood and mud in their homes would have been completely gone.

As to the water lilies thriving in the lake, this could be a long-term solution to help the typhoon-stricken community get back on its feet.

WATER LILY products made by evacuees in Barangay San Antonio, Bihan town, include sandals, bags, flower baskets and other household items. (MARLOUZ CINCO)

STRAP! Philippine Swearing group baseball cap (Team) the production crew of "Survivor" in Caramoan is set up the campsite of participants in the reality show which will start filming on Feb. 20. (PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER FILE)

INQUIRER mobile news

INQUIRER BREAKING NEWS: Meralco to implement 2-hour rotating brownouts in parts of Marikina, Manila, QC, Bulacan and Cavite due to outage at Sual power plant. National Grid Corp. has placed entire Luzon grid on red alert.

STAY AHEAD.
READ TOMORROW'S HEADLINES ON YOUR MOBILE PHONE.

text INQ <space> ON <space> BREAKING
to 4467 for each SMS alert

* Standard rates apply. P1.50 (Globe & Smart) / P2.00 (Sun) for each SMS alert

Call 896-6000 for more details.

Mercado shines as Painters triumph

By Manny Castillo

ANTIPOLO CITY—RHEIG IN FOUL TROUble proved to be a blessing in disguise for Ed Mercado.

Sitting out majority of the first three quarters because of fouls, Mercado let it all hang out in the fourth quarter to help Rain or Shine to a 89-84 victory over Coca-Cola last night at the Ynares Center here and to tie the quarterfinals of the 2019 PBA Philippine Cup.

Mercado scored 16 points in the fourth period, almost single-handedly tearing the game open for the Elasto Painters, who came from the wild-card phase as the No. 8 team—the lowest in the crowd—to survive two knockout games and earn a best-of-three date with powerhouse Barangay.

That series, as well as the Talk 'N Text-Barangay Ginebra duel, starts Friday at the Ynares Antipolo in Pasig.

Veteran Eddie Laure was also big for the second straight night in the wild-card, finishing off his telling 23-2 run early in the fourth period with two straight baskets that had the Painters competing to an 80-84 lead from a 67-61 advantage at the start of the period.

And every time the Tigers tried to come close, Mercado had an answer, most especially in one second stretch where he scored seven unanswered points that made it 91-75 heading into the final 4:01.

In all, Mercado finished with 20 points and eight points even as Ani Ezahra had 18 points and 19 rebounds for the Tigers who finished seventh in the season-opening tournament.

Meanwhile, four-lifted reinforcement Aaron Fuller could contribute like Lady Bradley or Kelly Williams in the Best Player of the Conference race when the playoffs tip off following in the next few days.

Williams actually closed out the eliminations round as the frontrunner in the MVP derby with an average of 40.0 statistical points per game.

The scores:

RAIN OR SHINE (89)—Mercado 20, Norwood 18, Onyi 15, Laure 12, Hubahib 9, Slaughter 5, Ismael, Andrada 3, Reyes 2, Rosser 0.

COCA-COLA (84)—Revilla 20, Tratter 18, Shumpert 17, Ponferrada 9, Escoto 8, Rodriguez 5, Jurgens 4, Dungca 3, Galanza 2, Pinder 1, Cruz 0.

Quarters: 19-20, 41-34, 63-61, 89-84.

Abi Ilidi, (above) battles Robert Pacadora of Bukidnon in an unusually quiet 4-4 win.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO BY JUN CAMPOS

Panabo soars with 8 wins; top bet falls

By Rocah Trinidad

PUERTO PRINCESA—POWERHOUSE Davao del Norte (Panabo) led the race to the semifinals with a parade of eight winners on Day 3 Monday, but the host was robbed of support by the fall of a celebrated young star from Bukidnon in the Smart Araneta Coliseum-bound boxing championships here.

Rafael Alkhalil, 10 going on 11, rode on skills and guile to oust Robert Pacadora to earn with a 5-0 conquest of the sharp and colorful top bet from Bukidnon, who was regarded as the most outstanding youth boxer in Mindanao.

Pacadora, 10 to claim gold candidate in 29 regional meets who entered the ring a huge favorite, fell victim to the smart counter-punching and ring craft of Alkhalil, who was later accused of elusive clinching in the two-min (30-kg) division.

Pacadora did appear unremarkable on opening day last Monday when he dominated with a belabored stoppage of Emmanuel Tapia Jr. of Misamis Occ. in the second round.

On the other hand, Alkhalil outpointed Jhon Jaspe Tacadao of Palawan, 13-5, in the same program.

The father of Alkhalil, Bantolino Olympian Roberto, swears his son would be to pass a supreme test versus Pacadora but as the same time readily declared a shaky counter-punching plot that paid off with the unanimous win.

Rafael next clashes with the equally awesome Winston Tarrazo, chirp and rival son of a tricycle driver from Misamis.

Alkhalil's elder brother, Robert Alkhalil, later stopped Robert Empay of Zamboanga in the second round of the atmweight (52 kg) bout to boost Ilocano Ortanez's score to five victories.

Former coaching Davao del Norte has eight wins after two days of action in the five-day meet among the country's select youth fighters aged 11 to 18 years.

Just like on opening day similar, younger boxers from the middle class (26 kg) to the semiwelterweight (38 kg) continued to outthink, elude, hammer (then) prove with their classy display of craft and competence.

"It's very amazing, it's delightful how these youngsters turn faster bodies away from the oncoming, often aimless style of their heavier elders," said Nessi Montes, Amateur Boxing Association of the Philippines (Abap) regional director from Tagbilaran, whose team stayed in the running with three big victories on Tuesday.

So fumbles, draws with Israeli rival

WIJK AAN ZEE, NETHERLANDS—GM Wesley So of the Philippines threw a chance to victory for the third time in four games when he allowed Israeli world junior champion GM David Navara of Israel to escape with a draw in the sixth round of the 82nd Corus chess tournament at the De Moriaan Community Center.

So had a strong positional advantage with the white pieces and looked headed to another smashing triumph against the time-pressured Israeli with a clear pawn advantage in a rook-and-knight ending.

But the 18-year-old Filipino champion missed the right continuation despite his advantage at time and allowed the Baku, Azerbaijan-born Israeli to force a standoff at 62 moves of the 64-square board.

"When the major piece worked, So had a rook, knight and four pawns against the rook, knight and three pawns of the 30-year-old Israeli today.

Chessdom.com analyst and Filipino GM Rustam'ezzat "Bong" Villamayor said So overextended himself and failed to take his way despite the obvious lack of time of Navara, who is best remembered for winning the European championship in 2004.

Overall, So now has 5.5 points on two wins and seven draws with still four rounds remaining.

The high school student at St. Francis Xavier College, Quezon City, is currently joined with leader GM Anish Giri of the Netherlands and half a point behind Gelfand, Giri-Caruana and Ivan Dini of the Netherlands.

The 15-year-old GM suffered his first setback in the 13-round, category-20 tournament, losing in agonizing fashion to Israeli prodigy IM Arjun Muralidhar of Slovenia in 55 moves of the Berlino to remain with 6.5 points.

SO

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

A knockout of the sweet, delightful kind

BARE EYE

Rocah Trinidad

PUERTO PRINCESA—A SENSATIONal knockout—the most applauded of the evening, was scored by the good-looking Robert Pacadora of Bukidnon on the first day of the Mahwood Youth boxing championships here last Monday.

Unknown to many, another big knockout was scored right there at dugsidi of The City Coliseum.

It was an ordinary KO.

It was both sweet and sweet, with the victim ending up suddenly delighted.

* * *

The victim's name: Ricky Vargas, president of the Amateur Boxing Association of the Philippines (Abap).

* * *

Vargas swore he was stunned cold by what he witnessed from the young boxers in the lighter weight categories.

The kids were a knockout and the drop child swore they would deliver efforts to surprise the youth boxing development program that has radically resulted in an inspiring display of world-class skills and composure from day youthful aspirants.

* * *

Vargas said he could not believe what he was seeing when he first witnessed the bouts in the veterans and 1st division, among kids aged 11 to 14, during the meet opening.

In a conference with Abap officials and regional heads earlier Monday, Vargas offered an initial outlay of P100,000 for each region, provided they submit a feasible development plan.

But after his inspiring experience at dugsidi last Monday, Vargas said they were ready to pour as much as needed to sustain the new development program.

* * *

Vargas said what he experienced was a complete contrast from what he saw in last year's National Open bouts in Bacolod, where most of the young aspirants appeared like amateurs swimmers who were thrilled to throw wildly into the ring.

"It was a phenomenal leap, super," Vargas remarked. "They are young, they appeared like they could go right for Olympic slots already with their high-level skills."

* * *

Of course, there were all a result of renewed and adequate dedication, said Gov. Gerie Mendoza of Misamis Oriental, a staunch backer of the new thrust in Philippine amateur boxing.

Mendoza, noted lover and supporter of sports, thanked the new Abap leadership for the phenomenal renewal for the national amateur boxing fraternity and vowed to be among its staunch supporters.

"From the judging and officiating have improved tremendously," continued Olympian Roberto Alkhalil, head coach of Mendoza's Misamis Oriental team, in the vernacular.

* * *

Actually, Vargas left this gleaming capital "in a hurry" on Tuesday morning earlier announced.

Where Edward Hagedorn is truly worthy," Vargas said after the leaders dinner hosted by the city government at the world-class Amazon Hotel on Monday.

Vargas continued to wonder where the Filipino-American Hagedorn has been drawing all the heroic energy that helped transform Puerto Princesa into "one of the wonders of the world" it is still.

MARCELO

BENITO

Marcelo, Benito lead RP karters

DEFENDING CHAMPIONS STEFANO Marcelo and Ruby Benito will bounce the Philippine bid as top bets between battle their fellow rivals in the 2019 KF2/KF3 karting series which gets under way on Sunday at the Cameron Circuit Philippines.

Ruby Benito, last year's KF3 champion, has moved up the KF2 division where he will join forces with defending champion Marcelo, Jaba Tacelbe, Kasher of the Year Joey Gobuyo, Ace Strainer, Prince Reyes, Nomads SL champion Jude Villalon, Mike Fox, VJ Saba and Andrew Galea.

Also joining the fray are foreign contenders are Japanese siblings Ren and Tadeo Takahashi and Indonesia's Kevin Sulaiman Noor and 13-year-old Rahul Fiqi Mirza.

Mayor was overall Formula 125 open house runner-up last year in the solon karting Open Championship.

In the Mini-BOK Challenge were last year by BPA Chrisbon Gaddi, Jonty Mangonon, Alex Medrano, Cecil Jay Dingerson, Mark Melgazar Joseph, Joseph Tantiansing and Ruth Escalante will take on, among others, Japan's Tomotsu Takahashi and Malaysia's Muhaidzir Jamaludi and Shahana Putra Mustaq.

For details, contact Carmenso Gotuli Philippines' Sean Brian at 0172161.

George Zamora, Contributor

FEU, Lyceum ladies post 2nd wins in PWBL tourney

GERMAINE LOUILLIER BACKED FEU Emilio University notched another win five minutes to pull off a 72-64 victory over LAndrie in the PWBL Bushington-Bridstone Cup held over the weekend at the Ynares Sports Arena in Pasig.

The Lady Tamaraws, who beat Team Asics in overtime in the opener, 81-74, again turned on the red-hot shooting of Rish Palmero, Karen Colmenar and Shiena Lim to post their second straight win in the tournament.

Palmero fired 20 points in a follow-up to her 31-point performance the last time in the second hundred by UPHA chair Bonifi Pilien, Rhal Gee Anchor Yeares, Rochelle and Phillippines.

Lyceum figures also notched its second win with a 65-59 nod of Team Jerry.

USAF champion Adamson, supported by Step, Shed, Duke of Northern Samar, registered its first win by shorting FSE, 79-75, while EXPOSEbal Graphics of coach Bibi Acobado outlasted Pascual Legends, 66-59.

Games are telecast every Thursday at 10:30 p.m. on Basketball TV.

The league is also hosted by Pilson, Everlast, Jones, Bendex, Adidas, Mikasa, Dell, Pagcor, PCSO, Province of Bataan, Asics shoes and Molten.

SPORTSWATCH

DMG Memorial golf tomorrow

THE 10TH DOMINGO M. GARCIA JR. Memorial golf tournament is already on its 10th year since it started in the Wack Wack golf and Country Club in Mandaluyong City.

Tournament director Bernadette Garcia said the original Jan. 8 schedule was later shot to a strike, staged by WWGC employees, which was settled by MCWC.

Tomorrow's golf event is donated by Toyota Pasong Tamo, Kia Motors and GATI, Inc., will be at stake in nine-a-side prizes in three designated holes.

An additional P50,000 cash prize donated by Dennis Pineda Jr. and Jonathan Ping for golf set from UCPB Insurance also await holes-in-one winners.

Zaragoza tops 3-on-3 hoops

THE ZARAGOZA STREET BOYS OF BRGY. 79 of Tondo topped the Barangay Tondo leagues of Mayor Isko Moreno's Manila youth fest of the Mayor Atlanta 3-Line 3x3 Manila 3-on-3 Inter-Barangay Championship in Binondo.

Zaragoza fended off the Gulf, 7-0, but got key baskets from Jojo Machacon who racked up six decisive points.

Skip 122 of San Sebastian St., Tondo, placed their offer hanging another Tondo team from Brgy. 87 Moriones St., 22-20.

Arantacia Santiago, 74

ARANTACIA PUTTING SANTIAGO, granddaughter of Manila Bulletin Tennis sportswriter Francis Santiago, passed away last Tuesday after a battle with lung cancer. She was 74.

She is survived by children Sherry, Gigi, Lisa, Raul, John, Steve, Jigger, Joy, Bobby, Pepe and 10 grandchildren.

The remains is resting at St. Peter's Memorial Chapel in Makati City.

RACING POST

By TRIP CHOICE
All Star Lasses LP

Zikoy Toddyvic S. Melco
Assistant Editor Francis T.

SPORTS

Federer gains 23rd Slam semifinal; Li ousts Venus

MELBOURNE—ROGER FEDERER and Serena Williams needed all their fighting qualities to console in the Australian Open on Wednesday after Li Na stunned Venus Williams to become just the second Chinese to reach the semifinals of a grand slam.

Federer ended all 13 games in a row to dig himself out of trouble and beat Russia's Mikhail Youzhny, 2-6, 6-3, 6-7 (5-7), 6-4, 6-3 to tie Boris Becker's mark for most Australian quarterfinals.

Serena was also staring down the barrel in her quarterfinal against Victoria Azarenka of Belarus before she recovered to beat Victoria Azarenka, 4-6, 7-6, 6-2.

Her elder sibling might have joined her but Venus threw away a match-winning lead at her 2-6, 7-6, 7-5 loss to Li, one of two Chinese women through to the last four at Melbourne Park.

Federer made it through to his 23rd consecutive grand slam semi but only after a titanic struggle with Davydenko, who won the opening set then got so easily overlooked in the second.

The world number one was struggling just to stay with Davydenko as the sun started setting and chances seemed creeping out to the Rod Laver Arena but seized his opportunity when the Russian suddenly went off the boil.

"I've played him many times and I know he goes through phases, you just try to stay positive," the Swiss said. "I wasn't playing terribly just struggling with the sun coming across. It's like a rain delay, you just wait."

Federer's next opponent will be either Novak Djokovic or Jo-Wilfried Tsonga, who met in the 2008 final, the only grand slam since the 2005 French Open where Federer has not been to the final.

Serena dressed why she remains the toughest woman in the world to beat, battling back from the brink of defeat to unravel en route to defend the title she relinquished to her sister last year.

The American lost the opening set to Azarenka then went behind 4-0 in the second as she clicked to doubt herself before she rediscovered her self-belief and found a way to win.

"I'm surprised. I didn't expect to win when I was down in the second set," she said.

"I thought if I lose the singles and the doubles, I could catch a flight on Friday. It's not often a champion is supposed to think but I did."

Venus was two points away from wrapping up a straight-sets win before the Australian set her nerves and silenced Li Na's roar for the crowd.

The crowd anticipated the prospect of an all-Chinese final to suddenly looming as a real possibility after Li Na loved Zheng for love the semis.

Zheng beat Maria Sirilenko 2-6 brace-station and plays Jarmila Hlavak in Thursday's semifinal while Li faces Ivanova.

Reuters

Reynante cops Manila GP overall crown

TOUR SUTRIAN LLOYD REYNANTE lived up to his billing to be bagged the overall Elite Open championship of the Brodbike Philippines-7-11 Manila Criterium Grand Prix along Roxas Boulevard over the weekend.

The 31-year-old Reynante got caught in the middle of the lead pack to settle for ninth place in the fourth and final leg, fell in one rectangle enclosed from overall honors.

Reynante, son of former Tour Philippines champion Jesus, topped the division with 40 points, relegating leg winner Ryo Yoshio to second place.

Roger Donato, son of national coach Ben, took the overall 25-and-under championship.

Other overall winners were Junior Sutrian (30–45 years old), Alex Bilbao (45–Old), Manny de Quiroz (56 above), Joel Belarmino (26–35) and Basil Tenedoran (46 above). Other leg champions were Arthur Bonty (26–35) and Bobby Dilwan (under 25).

Brodbike Phils. president Bong Soal and events director Ric Rodriguez thanked the supporters of the event, led by Manolo Mayo, Alfredo Lim.

Also here: P. Pajo

Gasol, Kobe power Lakers past Wizards

GASOL VICTORY

WASHINGTON—PAU GASOL AND KOBE Bryant scored 26 points each as the Los Angeles Lakers beat a distracted Washington Wizards, 115-101, Tuesday.

The Lakers shot 59 percent and forced six turnovers during a second-second quarter run. They had four sets of their previous eight road games and pulled to a 2-2 record midway through their current eight-game swing.

Antawn Jamison scored 27 points to lead the Wizards, who lost the last four games of a six-game homestand.

The game came to day after Javale McGee was received probation after pleading guilty to a misdemeanor gun charge, the latest fallout from last month's locker room confrontation between Crittenton and Gilbert Arenas.

In New York, David Lee had 20 points and 10 rebounds as the Knicks rebounded from a lopsided opening loss admirably to one against Minnesota, 132-105.

Al Harrington scored 20 and Wilson Chandler had 20 despite a strained left groin for the Knicks, who were dealt the worst home loss in franchise history when Dallas beat them 126-78 on Sunday.

In other games, the Dallas Mavericks edged the Milwaukee Bucks, 108-107, while Charlotte held off Phoenix, 114-106. Sacramento topped Golden State, 99-96.

AP

CAN YOU RESTORE YOUR CAR'S BRAND-NEW SHINE IN JUST 1-DAY?

YES

YOU CAN.*

AT LOW AFFORDABLE PRICES TOO!

With a SMOOTHER, TOUGHER GLAZE PROTECTION... so that it's EASIER to keep clean & shinier LONGER.

ALSO IN ONLY 1-DAY...

WHETHER YOUR CAR IS OLD OR BRAND-NEW... WITH THEBEST "CAN DO" TECHNOLOGIES, WE CAN:

- RID IT OF TOUGH ODORS due to germs, molds, fungus & ALL FLOOD WATER CONTAMINANTS, etc.
- Give it GUARANTEED BEST PROTECTION against EVEN FLOODS or "ACTS OF NATURE"... INCLUDING natural pollution due to "acid rain", humidity, pollution, etc.

WHICH NOBODY ELSE CAN DO! AND WHY UP TO NOW...

IT'S US. OR RUST.®

LARMAVERS UNIQUE "CAN DO" TECHNOLOGIES:

- INSTANT RUST PROOFING • RUST CONVERTER
- PAINT PROTECTION (ZERO GLARE) • WOOD CLEANING
- "ANTI-Rot!" DETAILING • PAINTLESS DENT REMOVAL
- NON-METAL BUMPER • WHEELHOUSE REPAIR • WINDSHIELD REPAIR
- TRUNK/FLOOR/HOOD REPAIRS • RESTORATION OF LOST PARTS
- MOTOR RESTORING, ELECTRONIC COMPONENTS, UPHOLSTERY, MAPS & CARPETS, ETC.

*Certain conditions apply, i.e., paint quality, degree of corrosion, severity of abuse, etc.

At your option, our standard basic guarantee (3 years or 3 years) is RENEWABLE & TRANSFERABLE for the ENTIRE LIFETIME of the vehicle! Do WITH our ever-natural & internal painted surfaces.

CALL OR DRIVE IN TODAY.

MAKATI – 818-7777 | PASIG – 671-9001 to 05 | 471-7501
EDSA – 439-4288 | 471-2877 • BALINTAWAK – 988-8131 | 981-6813
CUBAO – 332-5755 | 415-9950 to 53

RP losing Blu Girls, Blu Boys?

By Mari Anthony Reyes

QUIETLY, THE RP BLU GIRLS ARE CRASHing their orbits.

The core of the national women's softball team—champions in the 2005 and 2007 Southeast Asian Games—are playing for leagues abroad and officials believe they may play for foreign countries in international meets.

Amateur Softball Association of the Philippines president-manager Ana Veloso confirmed that FP ace Cyd Pontes, third baseman Aubel, second baseman Elaine Encinares, shortstop Maita Bautista and holdup Valenzuela are among those who have accepted offers to play abroad.

Except for Bautista who is in Singapore, the core are in Brunei with RP Blu Boy Edsel Encarnacion as their coach.

"I wasn't be surprised if Brunei will suddenly field a team made up of the core of the RP Blu Girls," Veloso told the batmen. "Softball is now an open sport."

There are other Blu Girls members who are abroad, but Veloso could not confirm their names.

"Given the Blu Boys best effort, and some of them have accepted those offers which I cited from compared to Brunei," he said, adding that they have standing offers to play in Indonesia.

The Philippine Sports Commission has cut financial support to the Blu Boys and Blu Girls after both teams were defended, forcing the players to seek fieldhand elsewhere.

"We can't expect them to repeat the practice when they don't get monthly allowances," he said.

Softball wasn't played in the SEA Games in Laos last year, and the Blu Girls didn't qualify for the 2006 Asiad Games in Doha.

Still, the Blu Boys took part in the World Championships where they placed 13th overall—the last ever by the country—in Saskatoon, Canada last year. Veloso admitted that the PSC helped fund the stint.

TIGERMANIA: Pressure is key

MURAKAMI SEEKS REPEAT

TCC Invt'l fires off today

By Hsaong S. Carillo

STA. ROSA, LAGUNA—Mitsuo Murakami is ready to be pulled and pitted it out because those are the factors that will win the 63rd The Country Club International.

"(Hideaki) Matsuyama on (Tiger) Woods in this course runs five and five between," Murakami said yesterday on the eve of his attempt to become the first man ever to repeat in what has become the country's biggest pro event.

"You need to be patient and wait for your time," added the burly 6'4 Aklan Tour Q school sensation. "Whoever grinds it out (before) will win. And I bet you, the scores will be lower because that is what has been happening (in tournaments) everywhere (in the world)."

Murakami, who won by a record 13 stroke over Angelo Que last year, said that the Country Club course is in perfect shape, that it will reward drives to a fairway on the dog-leg greens.

The winds will also be a factor on the par-71 layout this time of year.

"I just got lucky on the first-day first (win)," Murakami, humbly said of his victory. "But (at) the time he last year's test, '97 course, everyone (in the field) will be looking for a hot start. But it's easier said than done."

Murakami tees off at 8:20 a.m. hole No. 1 with countryman Ismul Imran and World Amateur veteran Jessie Salandanan.

All past champions—Que, Jovino Dolaricos, Cesario Cano, Antonio Lascuña and two-time winner Jovie Prigoshen—are major contenders.

And Ilonz Dalvides, who says the Philippine Open at Wakapoint in Lipa City last month, underscored his resolution to go all the way this time by partnering with Taiwanese Tony Guo to fire a 61 and edge Pro Jun Sayo-ondoy.

Que was the bridesmaid the last two years after capturing the title in 2007 in a third round duel to remember with Lascuña.

Eala: Smart Gilas may have to play all-Pinoy

By Jane Manaois

IT LOOKS AS IF SMART GILAS, WHICH IS scheduled to play close to 80 international matches to prepare for the coming Asian Games, might be betting an all-local national team after all.

Jose Emmanuel Rodriguez, Philippine executive director Noli Eala yesterday said there is very little time left to work on a naturalized player for Smart Gilas, especially if the association has to find a replacement for the ineffective Jared Jeffries.

Jeffries, the team's candidate for naturalization, will reportedly be one league follower.

Eala said the will discuss the status of Jeffries with newly installed Gilas team manager Peñalver Lim, among other things, before meeting up with the latter's power forward NBA players.

"Getting a naturalized player for the team depends on how fast Jeffries can get on it," said Eala during the PBA Forum at Makati's JJN Avenue Tuesday.

The House of Representatives has five seats and left before it adjourns to give way to the coming presidential election in May.

"We (in particular Congress) are will not be able to do anything anymore. We have to wait for the new Congress but then again, nothing is certain."

Eala explained that Semjase, who explained G2Gdirect months ago, could still make it to time for the 2010 hoted in Guangzhou, China, which starts Nov. 12.

"That's why a choice has to be made with Jared or get a replacement fast if we are going to make changes," said Eala.

The 6-foot-11 Simpson complained of a hunting left knee the entire tournament and didn't play the last two games, including the bronze-medal victory over Syria's al Adna.

Aplus METRO
Editor Abelardo S. Ulandey
Mobile Alert: Text INQ ON (SEL/GLOBE or 4961) | Website: www.inquirer.net/metro | E-mail: pc_metro@inquirer.com.ph

DID YOU KNOW

FORMER President Corazon Aquino was a law student at Far Eastern University. She skipped her only one semester.
Cyril L. Bonalaste, Inquirer General

LIVING, BREATHING BILLBOARDS With billboard advertisements for a pharmaceutical company occupied on their backs, these crosswalk-as-a-screen in Manila, all the better to reach their targeted audience—the common man in the street. —

Cuerpo gives up bid to reclaim mayoral seat, at least for now

By OJ Yap

FOR NOW, SUSPENDED BUDdgets Mayor Bebot Cuerpo said he has withdrawn his attempt to return to his post pending the resolution of his petition with the Commission on Elections (Comelec) questioning the validity of his suspension.

He said there was no point in forcing his way back to the municipal hall unless the Comelec ruled in his favor, but he still insisted that under election laws, he should be reinstated.

Since Jan. 18, the start of the election period, Cuerpo had taken temporary residence at the town hall annex where he said he would continue to perform his functions as mayor.

But he admitted yesterday that he had yet to "sit inside(with) office on Monday and no longer had any plans of returning unless the Comelec approved his petition.

"I signed some documents like affidavits and certifications but these were no vouchers that came to me," he said.

In his Comelec petition, Cuerpo cited the agency's Resolution 6757 dated Dec. 29, 2009, which outlawed the ban on the suspension of "any elective provincial, city, municipal or barangay official, unless the suspension will be the process of applying, the Anti-Graft and Cuerpo Premiere Act."

He said it was not clear from the resolution if the prohibition covers currently suspended elected officials, or whether the prohibition only applies to suspensions implemented within the election period.

In the Comelec petition, Cuerpo cited the agency's Resolution 6757 dated Dec. 29, 2009, which outlawed the ban on the suspension of "any elective provincial, city, municipal or barangay official, unless the suspension will be the process of applying, the Anti-Graft and Cuerpo Premiere Act."

He said it was not clear from the resolution if the prohibition covers currently suspended elected officials, or whether the prohibition only applies to suspensions implemented within the election period.

Judge orders road rage suspect moved to QC jail

Doctors asked to submit report on Ivler's condition

By Nancy C. Carvajal and Tina G. Santos

ROAD RAGE SUSPECT JASON IVLER, WHO IS FACING murder charges for the death of a Malacañang official's son, will be transferred to the Quezon City jail as soon as he is well enough to be discharged from the hospital.

"In view of the arrest of the accused, Jason Ivler, the court orders his commitment to the Quezon City jail. However, cognizant of the public knowledge that said accused is presently undergoing medical treatment, the court defers such commitment pending [his] recovery," Judge Alexander S. Ibalo of the Quezon City Regional Trial Court Branch 76 said yesterday in a one-page order.

At the same time, he directed Ivler's doctors to submit a report on his medical condition within five days "for the court's guidance in setting his arraignment," he added.

Dr. Fernando Lopez, chief surgeon of the Quezon Memorial Medical Center where Ivler is confined, said the hospital that they have already received a copy of the judge's order.

"We will comply with the court's order and submit a medical report as soon as possible," Lopez said in a phone interview.

Asked how soon Ivler can be released from the hospital, the doctor replied, "He is still in a guarded condition because of an infection. I cannot say how long he will stay [here]."

The National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) earlier asked the court in order Ivler's transfer to the Quezon City jail instead of giving him to the bureau's custody once he is discharged from the hospital, citing security concerns.

"We also told the court that the NBI jail is already congested and that we already have in custody another high-profile subject," NBI Special Action Unit chief, lawyer Angelito Magno, said, referring to Sadid Ampatuan Jr., the prime suspect in last year's Maguindanao massacre.

The NBI, however, will continue to secure Ivler while he remains confined at the hospital for the two gunshot wounds he sustained when he shot it out with agents who were out to arrest him for the drafted Renato Victor Duelo Jr. on Jan. 18.

Ivler is accused of shooting Duelo dead during a traffic altercation in Quezon City on Nov. 18.

The NBI yesterday filed additional charges of direct assault complex with attempted and frustrated murder against Ivler in connection with the Jan. 18 shoot-out which left two NBI agents wounded.

His brother, Marlon Aguilar, was also charged as an accomplice for allegedly hiding him from investiga-

"WINNING YOUR BIR TAX AUDIT" SEMINAR
Feb. 24, 2010, 1-5 p.m. Richville Hotel, 286 EDSA, Mandaluyong City. Topics: Know BIR tax audit processes, your rights/remedies. Learn techniques & tips in handling tax assessments. Speaker: Atty. Rafael C. Vivero. Tax expert w/ 25 years BOV work experience. Expert in handling cases w/ BIR. 1st 10 paid Registrants get a free 5-minute consultation after the seminar. Early Bird registrants get 10% discount. Call Trilynn Knowledge Center Publishing at 331-6256, 331-6584. CP: 0916-2286777, 0916-2286780. Email: trilynn@globlnet.net & kcp_ph@yahoo.com
LIMITED SEATS ONLY! REGISTER NOW!

MEN'S NO.1 ENEMY
HAIRLOSS

DEFEAT IT NOW!
When hairloss strikes – fight it! Fight it at Svenson. Unlike gimmick shampoos and temporary remedies that only clean the scalp, Svenson offers **Baldness Preventive Programs** that deeply penetrate, control thinning, and boost new hair production for fuller, healthier hair.
Choose not to be bald. Choose Svenson – the professional hairloss and scalp expert. Call now for a FREE private consultation.
Svenson
call 892-HAIR (4247)

RED SKY The lighthouse of a yacht club is silhouetted against the darkening sky as the sun sets on Roxas Boulevard, Manila. —

JOY BELIEVES IN SEIZING THE MOMENT.
OWN A BMW 3 SERIES AT ZERO INTEREST FOR 30 MONTHS.
BMW EfficientDynamics
Autohaus BMW
Automotrum BMW
Performance Auto BMW
Prestige Cars BMW
Premier Cars BMW

Senators are also human

THE VULGAR LANGUAGE USED by some senators during the C-5 mid "merchant" controversy dressed the human side of supposedly honorable legislators.

When a person is very angry he or she tends to use gutter language to stress a point or get back (or can't call names).

I'm reminded of occasions when I was accused of using gutter language on radio and television these years ago on the love of my countrymates.

But I have a conscience. Hehehe!

* * *

Senate President Juan Ponce Enrile has screened Sen. Manny Villar of being in bedroom diversity the Senate in the presidential candidate in connection with the C-5 road extension project.

People who know Enrile don't believe him.

Enrile could well believe and he might be shooting "world" again this time around.

Remember his confession about the sugged methods on his reaction in 1972 to justify the declaration of martial law?

* * *

At the rate our good senators are behaving on the floor of the Senate during deliberations on certain issues, it would be a surprise if they do not get some legislators slot in Taiwan. They engaged in fisticuffs on the floor of the august body.

When they clobber one another on the floor, our honorable senators will put on a good show for their sober- minded elected them to office.

The gamblers among these countrymen might even bet on who would knock out whom.

* * *

In yesterday's Metro section of the business, a photo showed a security guard giving a haircut to a man in his post on Annapolis Street, Greenhills in San Juan City.

The guard was apparently moonlighting.

In times like yet was making an honest living, unlike certain high officials who took billions of pesos in bribes and played golf abroad on government time.

* * *

The public auction Wednesday of the P140.5 million "forest) mansion" of former President Ejup was not attended by a single bidder.

The Sand gentlemen put up the mansion for public auction.

So, no person in his right mind would buy a structure that is already decrepit and about to fall apart.

The mansion's state of disrepair seems to symbolize on behalf owner.

* * *

The Boracay mansion was a sight to behold in its heyday.

Friends of Erap and his relatives, Lucent Zaragoza, held conspicuous parties at the mansion that used to have a water pond and whales (and supposedly flown over from the beaches of Boracay.

He learned plenty council.

Everything in this world—wealth and fame—is temporary.

* * *

Here's a very revealing statement from Ms. Rhea Javier Gutierrez which was submitted by her psychiatrist, Dr. Rose V. Siu, to the Court of Appeals:

"I am broken with my bright to in my boss Dick Gordon's men and her son. If I am going to reveal everything that I know it might hurt my relationship and I don't want to do that but I don't want (him) to go to jail for a crime I didn't commit."

Estimado has been charged with large-scale estafa by security agencies and risk funders who entrusted jewelry and funds to him/them for him to sell.

Gutierrez's statement was submitted to the appellate court to justify her continued stay in a hospital instead of a prison cell.

Quirino Grandstand needs major facelift, says DPWH

WAITING FOR A BITE ON TWO Actor Ejup Estrada is not into the waters beneath the Ramon Gan Mateo bridge in Quezon City hoping that the kid will soon bring in a little while.

By Kristine L. Alave

THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC Works and Highways (DPWH) yesterday warned that the roof of the landmark Quirino Grandstand in Luneta Park could collapse and recommended that it be closed to the public for repair work.

The DPWH Building Inspection Team, led by Assistant Secretary Raul Asis, said there were cracks on the roof and beams of the building.

DPWH Metro Manila chief Edilberto Tayao, who accompanied the inspection team of the grandstand, estimated the cost of the repair to reach P50 million.

"We have to determine the depth of the cracks and subject the structure to further inspection for restoration and renovation. There is a need for immediate repairs and to suspend temporarily the use of Quirino Grandstand," said Tayao, an engineer.

The 3,000 square meter grandstand, which is located near Manila Bay, was the site of oath-taking ceremonies for past presidents of the Republic. It is also used as a venue for concerts and private rallies.

The DPWH inspection team also called for the rehabilitation of Quezon Bridge on the southbound stretch of the busy South Superhighway.

The bridge, according to inspectors, is shaken whenever heavy vehicles use it.

Tayao said the budget's deficit could be explored and concrete should be added to strengthen the bridge.

The rehabilitation of the bridge would cost P35 million, he added.

Fire hits Quezon City school; ₱3M lost in blaze

By Nancy C. Carvajal

A FIRE HOURS OUT OF THE Bagong Elementary School in Novaliches, Quezon City yesterday morning, resulting in the suspension of classes.

Fire Officer 1 Maurice Jose said no one was reported hurt, but the fire destroyed one of the school buildings that housed 12 classrooms.

The fire marshall said the blaze started at around 10:00 a.m. and had reached the Fourth alarm.

It was declared under control at 10:50 a.m., he added.

Jose said only a few persons were inside the building when the fire started because most of the students were taking a break.

"There was no one who presumed because it was easier time so most of the children were not in there rooms," he said.

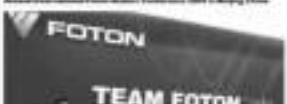
Arson investigator Rolando Odulio said they have yet to determine the cause of the fire that damaged at least P1 million in school property.

He added that the school canteen was the first to suffer flames coming out from the stock room of the property of, five of the two-story building.

HIKING FOR RECYCLABLES A woman searches for recyclable materials beside hiking boots during a Manila Bay.

Foton Motor Phils. bags award in 2009 International Dealers Conference

Shown in the picture (middle to orange) is Foton Motor Phils. (FMP) President and CEO Norman Spiller during the ceremony in which the Annual International Foton Dealers Conference 2009 in Beijing, China.



Shown in the photo are (l to r) Asia Pacific Chief Director of Truck Sales Department Eric Hu Yanming; Chairman Jeff Ng; Managing Director Alvin Ng; Executive Vice Chairman Anita Allen-Sales Director Armando Mallari; Jim Ivanchi, FMP President and CEO Norman Spiller; 2nd from right, FMP Marketing Manager Joel Miguel Santiago and; far from right, Foton China Sales Manager of Africa Region and Passenger vehicles Sun Chuang during the Annual International Dealers Conference 2009

Foton International held its Annual International dealers Conference last December 17-19, 2009 in Beijing China. Attended by the representatives of Foton distributors from 100 countries globally, Foton Motor Phils. (FMP) was one of the recipients of the awards given by the International Foton Dealers Conference for its outstanding performance in marketing and operational excellence. This was the most prestigious award given out in the conference.

Awarded by the President of Foton International Group, Wang Jufu, FMP was recognized as the premier Foton distributor in the Philippines. "Our hard work gave us an overwhelming success in the Philippines and an unexpected award from our headquarters in China... Words my team for making it all possible. We will do even better in the coming years," said FMP President and CEO Norman Spiller.

Currently the 2nd leading commercial vehicle brand in the country, Foton Motor Philippines will be more aggressive in 2010 with its efforts in marketing, sales, and after-sales to take the top spot from Chevrolet-Isuzu. It is committed to launch new and better products for 2010 that will cater to the business needs of its customers.

METROBRIEFS

Boy's body found in river

THE BODY of a 6-year-old boy who was believed to have drowned was fished out of Pasig River in Manila yesterday. The victim was identified as Margaret Bueno, a resident of Manila del Rosario Subdivision in Sta. Rosa, Manila. Police said the victim's body was discovered floating in the river near Manila de Rosario at around 6:30 a.m. this morning. Johnny Tejada, said he did see the boy as the latter was playing near the river bank at around 5 p.m. the day before. However, when he woke up the next day, he noticed the boy's body floating in the water. An inquiring team to report the incident to police. Police said they are looking for signs of foul play in the boy's death.

Tara E. Santos

Muntinlupa yields drugs

SIXTEEN inmates of the maximum security section of the New Bilibid Prisons in Muntinlupa City were arrested for drug possession during a joint operation conducted on Tuesday by operatives of the Bureau of Corrections (Bucor) and the Philippine National Police (PNP).

Aside from the three inmates, two others were being questioned for their possible involvement in the smuggling of methamphetamine hydrochloride—shabu—into the national penitentiary. Supt. Dante Jose Gomez, Bucor spokesperson, told the Bulletin. However, he declined to identify the inmates who were arrested or being questioned. A search of three of the 12 buildings in the maximum security section led to the discovery of six packets believed to contain drugs.

Mike Blanco

2 Japanese men jailed

TWO JAPANESE businessmen landed in jail for allegedly roughing a 28-year-old employee of a KTV bar where they accused of sexually molesting a waitress in Manila. Police identified the two foreigners as Satoshi Takenoshi, 32, and Takeshi Sugimoto, 34. Romeo Boy, 28, a marketing staffer of Night Princess KTV, formally filed a complaint yesterday before the Manila Police District's General Assignment Section against the two men for serious physical injuries.

Tara E. Santos

The WORLD

Editor Lawrence B. Quncio

Sri Lanka president reelected

COLOMBO—SRI LANKAN STATE TV on Wednesday proclaimed President Mahinda Rajapaksa the winner of a bloody post-war vote, as his rival fired bunkered down in a luxury hotel surrounded by troops he said he feared would arrest him.

Final results from Tuesday's poll were not due until after 4 p.m., but an estimated two-thirds of all ballots already officially released showed Rajapaksa with 4.2 million votes to 2.8 million for former Army commander Sarath Fonseka.

The two allies who led Colombo to the total defeat of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) became rivals in a cheerbought, bloody campaign that culminated in a relatively peaceful election on Tuesday with heavy turnout.

"The president has recorded a remarkable victory, with a more than 1.8 million vote majority," state-run Rupavahini said.

Rajapaksa said he wanted to seek a new mandate for his plans to develop Sri Lanka by exploiting its geographically strategic position centrally on sea lanes, rebuilding infrastructure and encouraging foreign investment and local productivity.

Moments before the state TV declaration, two people were killed and four wounded in a grenade attack on a Buddhist temple in the coastal town of Kompola. Reuters

A SOUTH Korean Army soldier aims his machine gun during an exercise against possible North Korea's attack near the demilitarized zone in Yangju, South Korea, on Wednesday. AP

Two Koreas trade fire, North vows no let up

SEOUL—NORTH AND SOUTH KOREA TRADED artillery fire near their disputed sea border on Wednesday and Pyongyang vowed to press on with live-firing exercises, ratcheting up tensions anew between the Cold War foes.

"Each firing drill by the ranks of the KPA will go on in the same manner in the future," the (North) Korean People's Army General Staff said in a statement, hours after its first exercise in the flash point border quashed an exchange of fire between the two militaries.

South Korea condemned the North's artillery fire as "a gravely provocative act" and warned it would respond sternly to future provocations.

North Korean land artillery batteries fired about 30 shells over waters that no laser into the area north of five disputed cross coast border line, Seoul officials said.

South Korean Marines on a nearby island responded by firing about 100 warning shots from Hwangpo cannons.

No casualties or damage were reported but the incident further soured tensions along the sea border, the scene of deadly naval clashes in 1999 and 2002. The latest fire fight in the area on Nov. 10 left a North Korean patrol boat in flames.

The South's Army said it had staged an armored artillery live firing drill in its own waters with which "no one can argue." The drill came a day after the communist North declared two "no sail zones" around the border, which has been a perennial flash point since it was drawn up by United Nations forces after the 1950-53 Korean War.

The North refuses to accept the line and says it should run further to the south.

"There is only the extension of the Military Demarcation Line recognized by the 1953 (North Korea) ... " its military statement said.

The two nations have remained technically at war since their conflict ended without a formal peace treaty.

South Korea called an emergency meeting of security and other ministers.

A senior South Korean military officer told a briefing that Seoul would have counter-attacked rather than just firing warning shots had the North's shells landed in the South's waters, Yonhap news agency reported.

"The North committed a gravely provocative act by shooting its shell down to the yellow sea in breach of the (Korean War) armistice and the inter-Korean non-aggression pact," Seoul's defense ministry said in a statement. AFP

Dying news media may seek salvation in Apple tablet

SAN FRANCISCO—STRUGGLING United States newspapers and magazines may seek Internet Age resurrection in a so-called "dream tablet"—a computer expected to grab the spotlight on Wednesday as a mouth-watering Apple event hints.

A notebook-sized version of an iPod Touch that Apple chief executive Steve Jobs is expected to show the world could try to do for newspapers what iTunes did for music and what the App Store did for mini-programs for smart phones.

"It will be notable," said Jim Gaines, a former corporate editor at Time Inc. who is now editor-in-chief of PUPmedia. "I don't think this device is the messiah for print, but it is very possible that this device does will be." Apple's winning tactic of tying content delivery to devices could be more significant than the hardware rolled out at the California firm's latest creation.

Newspapers and magazines that have gone digital to stay relevant in an Internet-obsessed culture have seen print advertising revenues evaporate as stories and images are freely indexed and shared online.

Apple has led the way in conditioning people to pay for applications, games, and other content for the iPhone and the iPod Touch. AFP

WORLD BRIEFS

Mudslides strand tourists in Peru

LIMA—Helicopters ferried out 473 tourists stranded for two days near Peru's famed Machu Picchu citadel after mudslides blocked a railway and killed a tourist and a tour guide. Authorities hoped to evacuate up to 800 more people on Wednesday. Almost 400 Americans and 100 Angentines were among the initial 2,000 travelers stranded, and United States authorities sent four helicopters to bolster rescue efforts on Tuesday. The hastily-set-up relief effort whisked over Machu Picchu to the Andean mountains on Sunday, when mudslides blocked the railway to the city of Cusco, which is the only way in or out of the area. AP

Bangladesh upholds death sentence for killers

DHAKA—Bangladesh's Supreme Court on Wednesday upheld the death sentence for the killers of the nation's founding president Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, whose assassination in a 1975 coup reverberates to this day. The court dismissed appeals by military officers and civilians to jointly being hanged after they were convicted 12 years ago for assassinating Mujib, as he was widely known. Mujib led Bangladesh to independence in 1971 during a bloody war against Pakistan. He was gunned down at his home, along with his wife and three sons, in a military coup on Aug. 15, 1975. His daughter, the current Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, was abroad at the time. AP

Pig heads found at two Malaysian mosques

KUALA LUMPUR—Malaysian police said severed pigs' heads were found at two mosques on Wednesday, in the latest of a spate of attacks on places of worship that have escalated ethnic tensions. The dumping of the heads of three pigs—considered unclean by Muslims—comes amid a row over the use of the word "Allah" by non-Muslims that has seen violence against 11 churches, a mosque and two Muslim prayer halls. Police and religious leaders called for calm and said that authorities may be attempting to stir up ethnic conflict in Malaysia, a predominantly Muslim-Malay nation which has large ethnic Chinese and Indian minorities. AP

New Honduran president to take charge

TEGUCIGALPA—Honduras's newly-elected president, Porfirio Lobo, will be sworn in Wednesday in a ceremony that the United States and many Latin American countries hope will draw a line under a seven-month coup crisis. But several other nations—Argentina, Brazil and Venezuela among them—are not going to recognize Lobo's legitimacy, saying it would imply approval of the undemocratic ouster of former Honduran leader Manuel Zelaya. Zelaya himself has vowed to return to Honduras after a period of reconciliation under Lobo's incoming conservative administration. On Tuesday, he confirmed he was leaving the Brazilian Embassy in Honduras to go into exile in the Dominican Republic. AP

French to ban Muslim veil in public places

PARIS—Many transport, hospitals, post offices—those and all public services in France would be off-limits to Muslim women wearing face-covering veils if a parliamentary panel's recommendations, released on Tuesday, become law. The panel's rite, 2 predicts such a ban by year's end. As envisaged by the 32-member multiparty panel, a woman wearing a covering would lose benefits or other state aid, for instance, would walk away empty-handed if she refused to uncover her face. She would also be denied entrance to the local town hall, the bus, the Metro and the university classroom. AP

Iraq militants using new tactics

BAGHDAD—Militant groups are finding new ways to foil Iraqi security by—hiding explosives in the chassis of vehicles or isolating them into secret compartments, the top US commander in Iraq said on Tuesday. The aims appears twofold: to maximize the blows in the Shiite-led government and exploit security gaps with inspections now almost entirely in control of checkpoints and patrols as the 97 military troops down to hungrily said Lt.-Gen. Raymond Odierno, told reporters. The methods include wrapping explosives into the gears and struts of vehicle chassis or into carefully-concealed chambers, he said. He said Iraqi authorities have requested scanners capable of looking inside sealed portions of vehicles. AP

US to Burma: Release Suu Kyi immediately

WASHINGTON—THE UNITED STATES called on Tuesday for Burma (Myanmar) to immediately release democracy icon Aung San Suu Kyi after regimes that the junta could free her following trial.

The Nobel laureate's party, the National League for Democracy (NLD), said it had heard that the military regime was considering freeing her in November—meeting global demands for her release but only after the elections.

"The idea that her release will somehow justify rumor after the election is anathema," State Department spokesperson Philip Crowley told reporters.

"We will continue to press the Burmese government for her release," he said, using the military-run nation's former name of Burma.

He was speaking after Secretary of State Hillary Clinton met with US Senator Jim Webb, the leading advocate in Congress for engaging the junta.

The NLD won a landslide victory in the last democratic election in 1990, but the junta, which has ruled Burma since 1962, never allowed the party to take office.

The military regime has drafted permanent restrictions appearing to keeping Aung San Suu Kyi under house arrest for most of the past two decades. AFP

Running barefoot is better, says study

HOBE—IF RUNNING IS YOUR THING, YOU may want to throw away those press sports shoes and join the Tarahumara, according to a study released on Wednesday.

Three-quarters of runners who wear shoes land squarely on their heels—about 1,000 times for every mile run.

But even well-cushioned sports shoes that help distribute weight across the foot cannot fully absorb the shock of these blows: 30 to 75 percent of regular runners' joints suffer overuse injuries, researchers.

By contrast, the vast majority of unshod runners don't hit the ground with their heels, landing instead on the sides or balls of their feet, the study found.

The practice is especially common in several east African countries where long-distance running is nearly a national past time.

In 1960, for example, a shoeless Abebe Bikila of Ethiopia won the 1960 Olympics marathon in record time.

By not "heel-striking," barefoot runners avoid painful and potentially damaging impacts that concentrate the equivalent of two or three times one's body weight across a extended surface. AFP

Now accepting bookings for March to May 2010.

So, for real quality shows, catch the limelight at OnStage Greenbelt!

For booking & inquiries, please call 752-7887 to 88

GREENBELT

SM SUPERMALLS

10 in 2010 : Global Pinoy Center Opens in 10 New Locations!

Watch out for the opening of 10 new Global Pinoy Centers near you!

SM City Fairview	**January 28**
SM City Clark	**February 04**
SM City Manila	**February 04**
SM City North Edsa	**February 10**
SM Megamall	**February 10**
SM City Bacoor	**February 11**
SM City Rosario	**February 11**
SM City Cebu	**February 18**
SM City Iloilo	**February 18**
SM City Davao	**February 18**

SM Supermalls opens the second Global Pinoy Center at SM City Fairview **today at 2 PM!**

GLOBALPINOY

Now OFWs and their families have another venue to enjoy the privileges of being a Global Pinoy Cardholder. After the successful launch of the first Global Pinoy Center (GPC) at SM Mall, the second GPC will open today at SM City Fairview.

Gracing the Global Pinoy Center launch at SM Fairview are OFWs that have brought pride to the country in various ways. On hand for the opening is Arnel Pineda, now the lead vocalist of legendary singing group, Journey, who will be performing at the event.

Also joining him are 2009 Women's World 10-Ball Champion, Rubilen Amit, and 2009 Survivor Philippines Survivors, Amanda Van Cool.

There will also be a Pre-Employment Seminar for those interested in working abroad at the SM City Fairview Annex at 5 PM.

Apply for a Global Pinoy Card by January 31 and get your card for FREE!

The Global Pinoy Program gives OFWs and their families the blue carpet treatment at SM Supermalls!

SM plays a special part in the lives of OFWs and their families. Over the years, SM Supermalls have added mansion kitchen, balikbayan shopping spaces, and cut-it-up bonding moments between family and friends.

Now, SM promises to make the mall experience more rewarding for our masters – also known through the Global Pinoy Card – an all-access card that gives over P50,000 worth of shopping discounts, freebies, and privileges from SM Supermalls and partner establishments.

Cardholders also get exclusive use of the Global Pinoy Center (GPC), a specially-designed lounge complete with free drinks where OFWs and their relatives can experience special privileges. It has everything the OFW and his family needs to keep making their life better.

GLOBALPINOY CARD

Here's what you can look forward to as a Global Pinoy Cardholder!

- Claim your remittance easily even on weekends and holidays.
- Avail of financial consultation with BDO entrepreneurial and livelihood training with OWWA-TESDA; information with satellite hubs for POEA, DMW & DOLE.
- Enjoy great value and rewards with the Global Pinoy Perks Booklet. Delight in freebies and discounts from thousands of stores across SM Supermalls nationwide.
- Get in touch with your loved ones with free video, voice calls, and free Internet access.

Get the Global Pinoy Card FREE when you sign-up by January 31! Simply bring your OFW I.D. or Proof of Remittance and get your card the same day!

SM PRIME HOLDINGS CARES

Global Pinoys Make A Splash at the GPC Launch in SM City Fairview!

OFWs that have made the Filipino proud will be making a special appearance at the launch of the second Global Pinoy Center at SM City Fairview today at 2 PM!

Arnel Pineda

The homegrown talent and Journey frontman will be on hand to give a LIVE performance at the SM City Fairview Arnel Pineda has gained an international fanbase after being discovered by the legendary band, Journey, on YouTube.

Today, despite touring the world, Pineda has found the time to share his blessings through the Arnel Pineda Foundation that helps impoverished children.

Rubilen Amit

Another notable OFW is the 2009 World 10-Ball Champion. Apart from being a three-time gold medal winner at the Southeast Asian Games, Amit is also the country's first woman world pool champion. Hailing from Cebu, Amit has been playing billiards since she was 12 years old. While working as a call center, Amit jumped at the chance to try out for the Philippines Ladies Billiard Team. She hasn't looked back since and she's set to win more medals and trophies for her talent with the cuestick.

Amanda Van Cool

The final notable OFW making an appearance at SM Fairview is the Solo Survivor Pinay winner. Out-surviving the other castaways and landing the P1 million prize during the pilot season of Survivor Philippines was no mean feat for this 25-year old construction worker from Alaska.

See them live at the launch of the second Global Pinoy Center at the SM City Fairview Annex today!

SUBSCRIBE TO THE PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER FOR ONLY

P18 per copy*

Call 896-6000

*Price applicable to GMA only

IN THIS ISSUE
■ **RP may halt** stimulus program /B2
■ **APC group** undertaking capital restructuring /B3

Editor Raul G. Marcelo • Assistant Editor Corrie S. Mariano

BUSINESS

IN THIS ISSUE
■ **RP defers** implementation of tariff cuts on sugar /B5

Jan. inflation seen to accelerate to 4.5-5.4%

Rising household demand affects commodity prices

By Michelle V. Remo

THE BANGKO SENTRAL NG Pilipinas said inflation in January likely accelerated in between 4.5 and 5.4 percent, on the gradual recovery of the economy helped boost households' demand for food and other basic commodities.

In December, inflation stood at an annual rate of 4.4 percent...the fastest in eight months.

According to analysts, faster rise in consumer prices may be expected this year as the global economy gradually recovers from the recent financial crisis-cum-recession.

"The uptick may be attributed to an increase in prices of selected food items, such as rice and sugar, and rates of utilities and domestic prices of oil," BSP Governor Amando Tetangco Jr. yesterday said in a text message.

Despite the faster rise in prices, Tetangco said the central bank remained confident that full-year inflation would remain within the target range of 3.5 and 5.5 percent. He said that any increase in demand spurred by the global recovery would not be substantial enough to cause a breach in the inflation target.

In 2009, inflation settled at an average of 3.2 percent, well within the government's target of between 2.5 and 5.5 percent.

The BSP's Monetary Board will consider recent movements in the prices of food, oil and other commodities when it sits down today to determine key policy rates.

The central bank is expected to keep its policy rates at a historic low of 4 percent despite rising inflation. It may also implement other measures to temper growth of liquidity in the economy.

In an earlier interview, Tetangco said the BSP would likely reverse liquidity enhancement measures first before raising key policy rates.

Liquidity enhancement measures include an increase in the budget for rediscounting by the BSP, and lowering of the rediscounting rate.

The economy, measured in terms of gross

JAN. INFLATION /B1

(See stock market report on Page B3)

Shares close lower

THE BENCHMARK PHILIPPINE STOCK Exchange index yesterday fell by 1.3 percent to 2,918.48 on fears of the US government's impending move to halt its massive stimulus and rising uncertainties over the Philippine presidential elections.

The scratch-the market marked a fourth consecutive day of decline. Analysts said that the slim gains of the first two weeks of the year had been wiped out.

The main index, which is now trading below the crucial 3,000 level, has been lost by 120.2 points, or about 4.4 percent, so far this year.

SHARES /B3

Investors fairly upbeat on RP

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE PHILIPPINES RE-mains a fairly attractive destination for investors despite the crippling effects of recent natural disasters and the Magnitude-seven quake, a survey by Dutch financial giant ING...

INVESTORS /B1

CAR of the YEAR
THE WORLD'S FIRST CAR THAT CAN STOP ITSELF
LOADED WITH TECHNOLOGY
LAUDED FOR SAVING LIVES
Car Awards Group, Inc.
THE NEW VOLVO XC60
WITH CITY SAFETY AS STANDARD
• 2009 Best Luxury Crossover and Wagon
• 2009 Best in Technological Innovation
CITY SAFETY is a Volvo world first that at speeds of up to 30km/h, can sense if a vehicle in front within 6-8 meters is at a standstill or is moving slower. If it senses an impending collision, the brakes are pre-charged to act faster on your response. And if you don't brake, City Safety automatically applies the brakes and switches off the throttle.
OTHER INTERNATIONAL AWARDS: 2010 International Truck of the Year - International Car of the Year (ICOTY) • Car of the Year Award category SUVs and Cross-Overs The Straits Times Newspaper 2009 Singapore • Car of the Year Award category SUVs and Cross-Overs MOST INNOVATIVE - 2010 VOLVO XC60 Writer's Choice Awards 2009 - Texas Auto Writers Association 2008 United States • MOST INNOVATIVE - 2010 VOLVO XC60 • 2008 Austria Auto Revue Award XC60 • Irish SUV Crossover of the Year 2009 • Irish Motoring Writers Association 2008 Ireland • Irish SUV Crossover of the Year 2009 XC60 • Auto Trophy 2008 Auto Zeitung 2008 • Germany Auto Trophy 2008 XC60 • "Innovation for Safety" French monthly car magazine "LAutomobile Magazine" • 2008 France "Innovation for Safety" XC60 Safety
VOLVO

RP may halt stimulus program

BSP expected to tighten lending regulations

THE MANILA CENTRAL BANK (BSP) may likely start to withdraw some of its stimulus measures by tightening lending under a rediscounting facility as the economy recovers and inflation picks up.

All 12 economists polled by Reuters expect the Philippine bank central bank to maintain the policy rate at 4 percent for the fifth meeting in a row. Also, majority do not expect a rate increase until the second quarter.

The central bank announcement will be made after the government releases fourth quarter growth data on Thursday.

Analysts in a Reuters poll predict annual growth to pick up to 1.4 percent from 0.6 percent in the third quarter.

Central bank governor Amando Tetangco signaled on Jan. 7 that the bank would terminate some of its easy monetary policy and start with a review of the rate for lending short-term money to banks under a rediscounting facility.

Traders believe that the central bank is likely to raise the rediscount rate next to 3.75 percent, or 25 basis points below the policy rate. Data showed 2.3 percent.

Some say Tetangco may opt to reduce the facility's budget from P66 billion.

The central bank raised the size of its peso rediscounting facility twice between November 2008 and March 2009, bringing the budget to P66 billion to alleviate funding pressures on banks amid the global crisis.

Such changes to the rediscounting facility will be consistent with the actions taken by the likes of the United States, the euro zone as well as other Asian countries, such as China and India, in withdrawing emergency measures put in place during the global financial crisis.

A change to the rediscounting rate or its budget will likely push up fixed-bond yields further.

One-year swap rates have risen by around 30 basis points since the start of the year, with spreads over the one-year swaps and the official policy rate widening to 58 basis points, widest since August 2008, on expectations of the central bank will start tightening policy.

With inflation not an immediate worry and the economic recovery yet to gain a solid footing, some analysts think the central bank may not take any action on Thursday and simply reiterate that liquidity withdrawal measures will come first before outright rate hikes.

Since his comments on Jan. 7, Tetangco has said in interviews that the level of liquidity in the financial system is adequate.

He also has given assurances there would be no drastic adjustments in policy rates, and its exit strategy will be properly timed to ensure it will neither accelerate growth or unwisely inflation.

Local bond yields will likely ease, but any drop is likely to be limited given expectations the central bank will start lifting policy rates in the second quarter. Reuters

HSBC sets aggressive debt market tack

By Dexter L. Luzon

HSBC'S LOCAL UNIT INTENDS TO aggressively underwrite more debt issues this year, as the country's continuing recovery from the global financial crisis raises demand for cash.

In particular, HSBC Philippines treasurer Jose Arnulfo Veloso said the British banking giant would focus its efforts on state and private borrowers which would need access to international and local debt markets in 2010.

"We will pursue more private and public sector deals that are at ease with our credit strategy, and customize the innovative financing and risk mitigating formula for our client's overall satisfaction," he said.

Veloso's statement came after HSBC was named "Best Debt House in the Philippines" for 2009 by Hong Kong-based The Asset financial magazine.

HSBC received the honor for the second year in a row.

Veloso, who heads HSBC Philippines' global markets unit, and debt capital markets head Carmen Pantaleon, accepted the award.

Apart from this, HSBC also won a number of other accolades for transactions it arranged in 2009.

The Republic of the Philippines' global bond issue in January 2009 won "Best Sovereign Bond" from both Asiamoney and The Asset.

Despite a volatile economic environment, the Philippine government was the first sovereign issuer in Asia to leave the market, and raised $1.5 billion from a successful Samurai bond that was four times oversubscribed.

Also, the Power Sector Assets and Liabilities Management Corp. won "Best Peso Bond" and "Best Issuer — Public Sector" from The Asset for its global bond issue last May 2009.

"Our game plan is to provide creative financing solutions to our current customers ... that allow them to ... manage their risk profile," Veloso said.

Investors . . .

From page B1

giant investor confidence index dipped for a mere months 1.94 in the fourth quarter of 2009 from 131 in the previous quarter.

The same ING survey also showed that the percentage of investors who believe that the upcoming elections in the Philippines would have a negative effect on the economy increased to 24 percent in the fourth quarter from 15 percent in the third quarter of last year.

But the number of respondents who believe that the elections would have a negative impact on their investment portfolio decreased from 33 to 23 percent over the same comparative period.

ING expected that political scuffles and near presidency gravely affected perception of the country in the final quarter of 2009.

"With significant losses following one of the worst flooding disasters in the country's history, increases in commodity prices and in the number of unemployed are potentially negative economics. The impact of natural disasters, along with widespread news of a political mass murder in Maguindanao, may have been key factors in the weakened consumer sentiment in the fourth quarter 2009, as well as in the flattening of investor optimism and confidence," ING said.

Jan. inflation seen to . . .

From page B1

domestic product, is estimated to have grown by at least 0.6 percent in 2009, narrowly averting a recession. Still, it was a sharp slowdown from the growth seen in previous years.

This year, the government expects the economy to grow between 2.6 and 3.6 percent.

Tetangco said the faster growth in 2010 would be moderate and would not likely lead to a sharp rise in demand that could cause inflation to rise beyond 5.5 percent.

Shares . . .

From page B1

All major counters ended in the red, led by the property, financial and mining/oil sectors, which declined by 1.6 percent, 1.79 percent and 1.68 percent, respectively.

Dealers said the market was still taking its cue from Wall Street. Its stocks fell Tuesday night as investors fretted over a prospective withdrawal of the US Federal Reserve's stimulus measures.

Also, the market has been weighed down by uncertainties over the May presidential elections as well as expectations of a large government budget deficit.

Decliners outnumbered advancers, 92 to 30, while 49 stocks were unchanged. Value turnover improved to P2.5 billion from only P2.0 billion on Tuesday.

Shares of Ayala Land Inc., Ayala Corp., Globe Telecom Inc., Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. and Megaworld Corp. were all affected by profit-taking. Doris C. Bautista

APC group undertaking capital restructuring

Firm seen embarking soon on geothermal power projects

By Doris C. Dumlao

HOLDING FIRM APC GROUP INC., 85% AFFiliate of property and gaming firm Bello Corp., is embarking on a quasi-reorganization that aims to halve about P7.7 billion in capital deficit.

Under the capital deficit a settlement, APC plans to expand into geothermal power investments, APC chief Willy Dolor said yesterday.

In a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange, APC said its board had approved the slashing of the par value of the company's shares which, in turn, would result in the reduction of its accumulated losses by about half.

The PSE implemented a one-hour trading halt on APC starting at 10:30 a.m. yesterday as it sought additional information on the company's capital restructuring.

"The new par value and the exact amount of the company's shares and the exact amount of the resulting reduction in deficit will be decided after further study and consideration," it said. Retained earnings refer to the portion of net income that is retained by the corporation rather than distributed to its owners as dividends. If the corporation booked a loss, the entry would be retained losses, accumulated losses or accumulated deficit.

APC has booked retained losses in previous years, resulting in a cumulative deficit of about P7.7 billion as of end-2008. It, however, earned profitably in 2009 largely due to the increase in the value of its investment in stocks.

From January to September last year, APC posted a net income of P33.3 million compared to loss of P13.07 million in the same period a year ago.

APC, which has a P9.09-billion balance sheet, has investments in energy-related projects, mining and manpower outsourcing businesses, telecommunications (now a minority shareholder) and a cement project which has been discontinued.

It was actively involved in petroleum drilling operations until June 2006 when it shut down its business.

The company has a fully owned subsidiary called Environment and General Services Inc. (EGSI), a company engaged in cleaning and manpower outsourcing services. Other subsidiaries include Aragorn Power and Energy Corp., Aragorn Gold Resources Inc., and APC Mining Corp.

APC also has a minority participation in Philippine Global Communications Inc.

Cepalco gets ERB go-ahead for CDO power plant

THE ENERGY REGULATORY COMMISSION has allowed Cagayan Electric Power and Light Co. Inc. (Cepalco) to continue operating its P50-kilowatt solar photovoltaic power plant in Cagayan de Oro City.

According to the ERC, it renewed on Monday the company's certificate of compliance, which is being issued to a power generation company found compliant to technical, financial and environmental standards that are specified in the ERC guidelines.

The issuance of a COC would allow the company to continue its operations.

"Cepalco's photovoltaic plant is very important for many reasons. It uses renewable solar energy, is environment friendly and it helps in meeting Cagayan de Oro City's energy needs using the novel design of the conjunctive use of a hydro plant," said ERC officer-in-charge Alejandro Z. Rocas.

The facility started its commercial operations in September 2008 after securing its first CDC from the ERC.

The plant is connected to the existing distribution lines of Cepalco with an annual energy generation of 1.3 million kilowatt-hours.

According to the ERC, the photovoltaic plant displaces hundreds of fuel oil and avoids around 24,000 tons of carbon dioxide compound emission into the environment.

Cepalco operates the photovoltaic plant in conjunction with its 7-megawatt (MW) Balacanayan hydropower facility, thus avoiding the joint PV/hydro resources to effectively inchart system demand.

The photovoltaic plant is deemed to be the first of its kind in the world because it is designed for a conjunctive use with the 7-MW hydro plant. It is also strategically located, being a distributed resource, which enables Cepalco to defer expansion or upgrades of some lines and substations.

With the aggregate installed capacity of 26,850 kW, Cepalco provides 1.55 percent of the maximum carrying capability to the Mindanao grid and only 0.19 percent to the national grid.

Cepalco's solar facility, which sits on a 2-hectare lot, is a "run-here" electric generating plant that uses sunlight to generate electricity.

"As such, the PV plant does not use any fossil fuel and does not emit hazardous effluents into the system. The PV plant does not generate any kind of noise since there are no moving parts therein. It also does not need large storage batteries to store the generated energy since the power generated by the PV plant is fed directly to the distribution system," the ERC said. Amy R. Remo

Get more from the bank that values you more.

Open an account now in any of 110 PSBank branches nationwide. Manage your account online via PSBank Remote Banking.

5.5%* TAX-FREE (5-year placement)

PSBank Prime Time Deposit

ATTENTION: CLASSIFIED ADVERTISERS

Publish a column of your:
- cars for sale
- products for sale
- house for sale
- apartment for rent

CLASSIFIEDS

PHILAM LIFE

We can lock-in your investment at its highest peak.

PRIME YIELD 1

An innovative, one-time pay, investment and insurance product-in-one that locks-in the highest value of your dollar investment regardless of market fluctuation.

Grab this limited opportunity now and get peace of mind like never before.
Offer is good until January 31, 2010 only. Call 528-2000 or visit www.philamlife.com

RP defers implementation of tariff cuts on sugar

Reduction to start only in 2012 and will be done at slower pace

SUGATA

By Rina T. Chikamatsu

THE PHILIPPINES HAS SUCCEEDED in getting a deferment to the implementation of this tariff cut in sugar, as Thailand, a major trading partner, did not press any opposition to it and chose to focus on tariff negotiations for rice.

Also, the tariff reduction will be done at a slower pace.

The sugar industry had expressed fears that the implementation of the scheduled tariff cuts under the Ascend Free Trade Agreement Common Effective Preferential Tariff (ATIGEPT) scheme could kill the sector.

The delay in the implementation of the tariff reduction will give the sugar sector more time to adjust to trade liberalization.

Tariffs for imported sugar, currently at 38 percent, will be lowered through a "stepladder approach," Agriculture Undersecretary Segfredo R. Serrano said in a press.

Under the GPT, the Philippines should have lowered the tariff on sugar to 36 percent by 2009 and to 0.6 percent by 2010 but this country appealed to the Asean neighbors and the schedule was extended.

"It's something like 38-36-30-25-18-Basi 15 percent and finally to 5 percent (by 2015)," he said.

The sources think country will maintain the tariff rate of 38 percent up to 2011 and bring it down to 28 percent in 2012, 20 percent in 2013, 10 percent in 2014 and to 5.0 percent in 2015.

Asked whether Thailand had sought compensation in agreeing to the gradual lowering of sugar tariffs for the Philippines, Serrano said there was none.

"They focused on (tariff negotiations for) rice. They may have also considered the issue of whether they have a good sugar crop," Serrano said.

The whole world is having sugar supply problems, he said.

Sugar farmers, he said, needed to improve their competitiveness and then they should diversify their products to cope with a liberalized trade regime.

According to Philippine Sugar Millers Association executive director Ambassador B. Amatong, the country still has to prepare for competition, especially from Thailand which has been exporting sugar since 1960s.

The Philippines, to recall, has ramped-up its exporting to the US market.

Sugar Regulatory Administration administrator Rebel L. Cocilovo also urged farmers to take advantage of the high sugar prices, which would likely last for about ten years, to finance more efficient farming practices. This way, he said, farmers could be competitive even when sugar tariffs go down.

In the meantime, the Philippines is grappling with a surge in sugar prices in the local market.

The Philippines, as a net importer of sugar, has enough stocks, according to sugar industry stakeholders.

However, Agriculture Secretary Arthur Yap said that there was not enough surplus to prevent spikes in prices as industrial users try to shore up their sugar stocks in response to a global price increase.

"The government earlier set the suggested retail price of refined sugar at P60 to P62 per kilo.

"There is regular rolling in August and in our supply contract for the light demand is in January and it takes time to transport. That's why we are importing 200,000 metric tons (of sugar) immediately," Yap said.

TMP names new president

TOYOTA MOTOR PHILIPPINES (TMP) Corp. has announced the appointment of Hidetoshi Sugiyama as new president.

Sugiyama succeeds Hiroshi Ito who last concluded his four-year term as president of the country's leading automotive manufacturer.

Sugiyama joined Toyota Motor Corp. (TMC) in 1983 and was initially assigned in the Africa division. Prior to his appointment as president of TMP, Sugiyama was with Toyota Motor Thailand for three years, and then with Toyota Motor Asia Pacific in Singapore for one year, where he was responsible for marketing and sales.

"I am excited to assume the mantle of leadership of the No. 1 car company in the country and I feel a great sense of responsibility to sustain its achievements," said Sugiyama. "As incoming TMP president, I take it as my mission to lead our company in order to meet the expectations of our stakeholders."

According to Sugiyama, TMP will strengthen its market presence in terms of sales and share, as well as accelerate its efforts to push for further improvements in the quality of its products.

Coco oil exports seen up 21%

THE PHILIPPINES, THE WORLD'S biggest coconut oil exporter, forecasts shipments to rise more than 21 percent to 980,000 tons this year, as lower prices boost global demand, the head of an industry group said on Wednesday.

But the first time since February 2008, coconut oil exports fell last year as the once popular palm kernel oil is a trend that began in December, due to slack demand for its end-products amid the global recession.

Coconut oil—used in food, detergents and biofuels—for April-May delivery was quoted at a low $728 per metric ton on Tuesday, while palm kernel oil was at $900/ton.

"We expect demand to recover given the fact that coconut oil is the cheapest vegetable oil right now," Yvonne Aquilio, executive director at the United Coconut Associations of the Philippines, said in an interview.

"The recovery in the global economy should boost demand and our export improved processing capacity so we have more oil to sell."

The country exports 80 percent of its coconut oil output, but analysts say lower than 5 percent of the global fats and oils market rise to a drop in local production in recent years and the rising popularity of other vegetable oils such as palm.

The United States and Europe buy four-fifths of the Philippines' coconut oil shipments, while the rest go to Asia.

Manila imported 800,000 tons of coconut oil in 2000, down nearly 6 percent from year-ago level, weighed by slower demand in the first half.

Output of sugar, the third coconut sweet from which oil is extracted, is projected to reach 2.65 million tons this year, lower than the 2.8 million produced in 2009, said Aquilio.

An ongoing El Niño weather pattern, which causes severe crops, is unlikely to hurt coconut output this year, with only two regions in the central and southern Philippines expected to say below normal rainfall beginning December.

"There would only be a drought if the rainfall remained below normal levels for four successive months," said Aquilio.

"Besides, coconut is a very resilient crop and any El Niño effect would only be seen next year."

Reuters

PNOC earmarking P2B for RE projects

By Amy R. Remo

OIL-BASED PHILIPPINE National Oil Co. (PNOC) plans to invest an initial P2 billion in the geothermal sector this year of its renewable projects.

According to a government source, PNOC is mulling over two options to raise funds for its 120-megawatt projects—the service contracts for which were awarded last year—and possibly, four geothermal power projects pending at the Department of Energy.

The highly-valued source said PNOC were planning to tap the local debt market, from partnership with other firms to finance these projects, or both.

The source added that the investment from sources tabs will from, Japanese and American investors. It also has expressed investment for possible tie-ups with Aboitiz Power Corp. and Ennis Energy Co. (Cepco).

PNOC, through its wholly-owned subsidiary PNOC-Renewables Corp., has 11 hydropower projects that are expected to operational by a combined 27%2 megawatts (MW).

Data from the Department of Energy showed that PNOC-RC had plans to invest as much as P25.6 billion for these projects, which are located in Luzon and Visayas.

PNOC-RC's projects in Negros Oriental include the Faraon-Bacolod hydroelectric power (HEP) project in La Libertad, which is projected to generate some 11 MW; as well as its geothermal HEP in the island, Okoy HEP in Negros with 11 MW; Sierra HEP in Bulusan, 0.4 MW; and Bongabong HEP in the Cotabato, 45 MW.

The company also has the Abatan HEP in Cebu, Biliran, which is expected to produce 17.8 MW of hydropower; Talahiban Hydropower (MW) project in Baco, Oriental Mindoro, which would have an 18 MW capacity.

Smart asks NTC to suspend proceedings on per-pulse issue

By Paolo G. Montecillo

LEADING MOBILE NETWORK Smart Communications has asked the National Telecommunications Commission (NTC) to put a hold on the proceedings on the new per-pulse charging system in deference of the pending court case on the same issue.

In a motion filed earlier this week, Smart had asked the NTC to suspend its order issued last month mandating local networks to shift to the new advanced charging system in replace the prevailing per-minute charging.

The validity of the NTC's order is being contested by the Court of Appeals following separate petitions filed by several local telecom firms to declare the new billing system illegal.

"Granted most respectfully petitioner that the proceedings in this case be suspended until the final resolution of Smart's Court of Appeals petition," the company said.

The per-pulse billing system, which was first proposed last quickly shot down in the year 2006, was revived by Senator Juan Ponce Enrile last year.

The new scheme does not change the per-minute cost of cellular phone calls, but calls makes it appear would cost much less.

After finding that none of the local telecom players had complied with the new rule, the NTC issued show-cause orders asking all companies to explain their defiance. The NTC also threatened to revoke the firms' franchises should they not give an acceptable explanation and pledge their compliance as soon as possible.

Smart, together with rival telecom firms, have asked the appellate court to issue a stay order on the implementation of the per-pulse charging and declare the new rule illegal.

"Smart renews for the suspension of the proceedings in this case until the Court of Appeals has determined the validity of said order," the company said in its motion.

The suspension should be done "not only in deference to this court, but to save the effort and time of everyone in the proceedings in this case may be declared void later on," the firm added.

BPOs mapping out plans

By Dinah L. Lucir

LEADERS FROM VARIOUS BUSINESS process outsourcing groups are expected to be drawn to exchange for the next decade that will address looming challenges for the industry when they convene in March 2010.

At particular, the BPAO industry is expected to announce its responses to issues facing its low value-added "call center" segment, as well as concerns regarding the BPO licensing industry in the Philippines.

These and other important issues will be tackled during the fourth Annual Call Center and BPO Training Conference which will be held on March 11-12 in Makati City, organized by TeleDevelopment Services and Technikon.

The industry-wide networking process comes as the BPO sector marks its 10th year of outsourcing operations in the country.

As the fastest-growing segment of the Philippine economy, it is expected to earn at least $11 billion and employ 1 million people by the end of 2010.

"Although the sector's industry growth was spurred by voice services, high-value added, complex contact centers as knowledge process outsourcing are predicted as the next revenue-winners in the outsourcing industry," the association organizers said in a statement. "Thus, there is increasing need for deeper cooperation between the members of the industry to prepare and develop talent, technology, and infrastructure for the next 2nd Stages in the next decade."

Insurers to cut premium rates

By Michelle V. Remo

LIFE INSURANCE COMPANIES ARE SET to reduce their premium rates, which will make insurance products more affordable, should the bill reducing the tax structure on insurance products be enacted into law.

The Philippine Life Insurance Association (PLIA) is hopeful measure will soon be signed by the President after passing in both houses of Congress in December.

"It is the commitment of the industry to collect lower rates for cost of insurance. Hopefully, we can start to reduce the people," Mahlini Bana, the newly elected president of PLIA, told reporters yesterday on the sidelines of the organization's annual members luncheon meeting.

Mahlini said the industry was told that the bill would soon be submitted by the Bicameral conference committee of Congress to Malacañang for approval. It is now awaiting the signature of Senate President Juan Ponce Enrile.

The industry he said, was confident the President would sign the bill despite the Department of Finance's own estimate over the potential revenue losses arising from the measure.

The bill seeks to make insurance more affordable by reducing the premium tax from 5 percent, a study in the consumer insurance system from a fixed rate of 30 centavos per P100 worth of premium to a range of zero to P300, and by eliminating the insurance taxes starting the fifth year of the proposed law's implementation.

Mahlini said the DOF was against the provision of the bill exempting insurance from taxes on the fifth year onwards, but was not against the other provisions of the bill.

The DOF's position to put a sunset provision on insurance tax would not be a problem for PLIA because the organization deemed the reduction in the premium tax more important, Mahlini said.

BUSINESS

Asia stocks fall on China jitters, concerns over Fed meet; yen gains

SINGAPORE—ASIAN STOCKS fell for the eighth straight day yesterday on fears that China's heightened efforts to rein in soaring credit growth could hamper the global economic recovery.

Investors were also cautious ahead of the conclusion of a two-day policy meeting by the US Federal Reserve later today.

The meeting is expected to yield little in terms of a monetary policy shift. But traders will scour a Fed statement afterward for clues on how much longer it may leave its stimulus investor woes and easy money policy in place, and for updates on the health of the US economy.

The meeting is taking place amid a fierce Senate debate over whether Chairman Ben Bernanke should be appointed for a second term, which has also weighed on investor confidence this week.

The MSCI index of Asia Pacific stocks outside Japan fell 1 percent yesterday, surrendering brief early gains.

The index slid 2 percent on Tuesday to its lowest in two months after China implemented a rise in bank reserve requirements to curb loan growth.

Japan's Nikkei average fell 0.7 percent to its lowest in five weeks, while South Korean stocks shed 0.7 percent to a seven-week low with sentiment weighed by reports North and South Korean forces exchanged artillery fire.

Many investors had been putting in a smoother and stronger economic rebound this year, which would justify higher share valuations.

Now that questions are growing about the pace and depth of a recovery, share prices are highly vulnerable to a correction, especially after many global indexes have rallied more than 60 percent from lows seen in March last year.

The yen, seen as a safe haven in times of market turmoil, firmed broadly as investors dumped high-risk assets. Reuters

Resorts World Manila unveils Maxims Tower artpiece

MANILA, PHILIPPINES—Resorts World Manila (RWM), through its Chief Executive Officer, Mr. Thilo Wiek, and Executive Vice President, Mr. Peter Forest, unveiled the Dale Chihuly artpiece appropriately named Maxims Tower last December 23, 2009 in the Maxims restaurant.

Maxims Tower is a glass sculpture which came from the collection of Tan Sri Lim Kok Thay, chairman and CEO of Genting Group. Handblown after the most luxurious hotel in the Philippines, Resorts World Manila's 6 is approximately worth half a billion US dollars and is on loan to RWM.

"This is one of the most beautiful Chihuly collections of Tan Sri Lim Kok Thay and we are honored that it is here in Manila," said CEO Thilo. "No doubt—its spiralling towering stature, magnificent use of the glass medium and remarkable play of colors in every angle is certain not only to the art connoisseurs but also to Resorts World Manila patrons," he added.

The unveiling was hosted by print and television celebrity, Mr. Johnny Litton, and graced by national artist Ramon Orlina, who internationally recognized for his glass sculptures and a friend of Chihuly. Known personalities from the government, social circles and business community likewise attended this special unveiling.

"Resorts World Manila is not only a place for exciting gaming, great food and high-caliber entertainment but it also houses important art collections such as the Maxims Tower," Operations Manager Isidro Lorenzo, Jr., President Kingston Dass said. "Maxims Tower is the only Dale Chihuly artpiece in the Philippines," he added.

Dale Chihuly's achievements in the medium of glass are well-known—commissions from three decades. His artist has exhibited extensively and his site-specific, public sculptures can be seen in cities throughout the world.

Chihuly has also presented his large-scale sculptures in many outdoor and garden settings including Chihuly Over Venice, Chihuly Over the Light of Jerusalem, Fairfield Park Conservatory in Chicago, and the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, near London.

He has been awarded ten honorary doctoral degrees, a Louis Comfort Tiffany Foundation Award, a Fulbright Fellowship, and two National Endowment for the Arts Fellowships.

Asian developing countries all set for growth, IMF says

WASHINGTON—JAMES DENG/GMANEWS.TV: Asian economies are seeing acceleration in 2010, led by an expected 10-percent growth rate by China, the IMF forecast Tuesday as the region recovers swiftly from a global downturn.

The International Monetary Fund also urged market investors about immediate risks to China's growth as Beijing moved to tighten liquidity amid soaring inflation and record high bank lending.

In its World Economic Outlook update released Tuesday, the Washington-based fund said Asian developing economies were set to grow at an average 6.4 percent this year as well as in 2011, compared with 6.5 percent in 2009.

China, the traditional global growth driver, was likely to post 10-percent growth this year, the IMF said, raising by one percentage point its 9 percent forecast made in October.

China's economy expanded 8.7 percent in 2009.

Chinese gross domestic product, a broad measure of a nation's goods and services output, amounted to double-digit growth in the fourth quarter of 2009 at 10.7 percent, Chinese authorities said last week.

That pace surpassed the government's target of 8 percent, a level that is seen as crucial to foster job creation and stave off social unrest in China's urbanizing population of 1.3 billion people.

The fund said "key emerging economies in Asia are leading the global recovery" as the region became the first to rebound from a global downturn stemming from the worst financial crisis in decades.

India is expected to join China in providing impetus to growth in Asia this year and in 2011, the IMF said.

India's GDP should grow 7.7 percent growth in 2010, it said, revising upward by 1.3 percentage points its earlier forecast.

Japan is poised to emerge with a growth of 1.7 percent in 2010—unchanged from the last forecast—after a sharp 5.3-percent economic fall last year, the IMF said, adding that Asia's richest economy would accelerate to 2.2 percent next year.

The fund also said that the Southeast Asian economies of Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand were forecast to grow at a slightly better average of 4.7 percent in 2010 from 1.3 percent last year.

Asia's growth forecast is above that for the world's emerging and developing economies of about 6 percent in 2010 following a modest 2 percent last year.

The IMF sees more rapid output in 2010 for the world's developing economies.

"Stronger economic fundamentals and swift policy responses have helped many emerging economies to capture the larger part of the unprecedented external shock and quickly re-attract capital flows," it said. AFP

THE NEW Matahari Department Store in Jakarta. US-based global equities group CVC Capital Partners has agreed to take over Indonesia's biggest department store chain for $740 million, unofficial media reports. Market analysts welcomed the deal as a sign of badly needed investment from foreign investors in Southeast Asia's biggest economy. AFP

William Barton and the Orava String Quartet performs in Ayala Malls

As part of its National Day celebration on the 28th of January, the Australian Embassy is bringing renowned didgeridoo virtuoso William Barton and the dynamic Orava String Quartet to Manila for a series of performances at the Ayala Malls.

"Their music is part of Australia's vibrant cultural and artistic scene, influenced by the unique blend of the world's oldest continuous cultural traditions and rich mix of migrant cultures," Ambassador Rod Smith said.

William Barton is one of Australia's leading didgeridoo players and composers. He has worked with some of Australia's finest composers including Peter Sculthorpe, Ross Edwards and Philip Bracanin. In 2008, he toured Germany with the Queensland Ballet and in 2007, performed with the Brooklyn Philharmonic Orchestra, Reno Chamber Orchestra, Jena Philharmonia, and Sydney, Tasmanian and West Australian Symphony Orchestras.

The Orava String Quartet was founded in 2007 by three siblings, violinists Daniel and Sylvia and cellist Karol Kowalik, who are joined by violist Thomas Chapman. Mentored by some of Australia's most respected musicians, including Update Weasel and Janet Davies, the quartet has performed in some of Sydney's most prestigious venues as well as in Colorado, Shanghai, Hong Kong and the United Arab Emirates.

The group will perform on 27 January, 8:00pm at the Greenbelt 5 Park with renowned Filipino artists Cynthia Alexander and Jonny Alegre of Human Fish; 28 January, 8:30pm at the Alabang Town Center Town Plaza; and 29 January, 7:00pm at the Trillanes Park. They will also conduct master classes on 27 January, 10:00am at the University of Santo Tomas Conservatory of Music and 28 January, 10:00am at the University of the Philippines Diliman College of Music.

The performances are part of the Embassy's Celebrate Australia 2010 which showcases Australian music and art. Celebrate Australia 2010 also includes Mikey Hot Contemporary Australian Glass, an exhibition featuring the works of eight internationally renowned and celebrated Australian glass artists at the Ayala Museum from January 27 to February 28.

Celebrate Australia 2010 is presented by the Australian Embassy in partnership with Ayala Museum, Greenbelt 5, Alabang Town Center, Trillanes, Bonifacio Millennium, 3rd Avenue, Dantes, Tourism Australia, Medina Apartment Hotel, Wine Depot, Villona Coffee and ClickTheCity.com. For more details contact 7578132 or visit www.philippines.embassy.gov.au.

Japan's exports grow for first time in 15 mos.

TOKYO—JAPAN'S EXPORTS grew for the first time in 15 months in December as robust Asian demand fueled recovery in the world's second biggest economy.

Exports jumped 12.1 percent from a year earlier to 5.4 trillion yen ($60 billion) in the month, the finance ministry said Wednesday.

Asia-bound exports, which account for more than half of Japan's total shipments, surged 31.2 percent to 3.6 trillion yen, the ministry said. Japan's exports to China soared 42.6 percent to 1.1 trillion yen on brisk sales of cars, plastics and organic chemicals.

The results underscore the rising importance of emerging Asian economies in Japan's struggle to sustain growth. The country has emerged from its severe recession since World War II but its prospects are threatened by deflation, a dangerous yen and persistently weak domestic demand.

"Asia is driving this improvement," said Goldman Sachs economist Chikawang Tan. Goods of all types—from machinery to electronics—are benefiting, he said.

China last year surpassed the United States to become Japan's biggest export market for the first time since comparable figures became available in 1979. AP

Toyota suspends US sales of eight models in recall

TOKYO/DETROIT—TOYOTA Motor Corp will suspend US sales of eight models subject to a massive safety recall, an unprecedented move that sent its shares tumbling and raised questions about the timing of its earnings recovery.

Toyota said it would also halt production of the models, including the best-selling Camry, at plants in the United States and Canada in the first week of February.

Last week, Toyota announced it would recall 2.3 million vehicles in the United States to fix possible faulty accelerator pedals, its second large recall in four months in the United States, its biggest market.

The sales suspension and recall includes Toyota's top-selling vehicle in North America, the Camry, for model years since 2007.

Also included are the 2009-2010 model year RAV4, Corolla and Matrix, the 2008-2010 model year Sequoia, the 2007-2010 model year Tundra, the 2005-2010 model year Avalon and the 2010 model year Highlander. Reuters

Lifestyle Section San Juan
LIFESTYLE Food

Sexy, luscious his 'n' hers Valentine menu

By Irene C. Perez

DINING area by the fireplace at Restaurant Verbena in Discovery Country Suites, Taguig city

From oysters to steak, this Tagaytay resto in the Miele Guide continues a talked-about innovation

A SIGNIFICANT SPREAD updated with goodies and specialties, Verbena's chefs for a Valentine's Day dinner are set!

Restaurant Verbena at Discovery Country Suites is preparing a Heart Menu set menu that gives a twist to Valentine dining. Colombian chef David Pardo de Ayala is making sure all items in the menu have a little aphrodisiac—food known to increase desire—among the ingredients.

"It, like and Heart menu is a Valentine's Day culinary confection at Restaurant Verbena," says Pardo de Ayala. "I wanted to launch the anniversary of a single menu by offering two distinct alternatives [for him and her]. I also noticed that guests love to share their food, romantically giving a bite of their own food to their partner."

Chef Pardo de Ayala says he has been offering the unique file and short menu for four years now, a specialty only available in Restaurant Verbena.

The first her and for Him special is available for P1,300 per person, or P2,000 with a single glass each of Anakena Chardonnay and Cabernet Sauvignon wines for lunch and dinner.

It's available on Feb. 12-14, in addition to Restaurant Verbena's a la carte menu, except for Valentine's Day dinner where it's the only menu available. Lunch is from noon to 3 p.m., while dinner is from 6:30 p.m.

"Love is in bloom" is this year's theme at Discovery Country Suites. Expect lots of fresh flowers, candles and sweet piped in music to complement the dining ensemble and surroundings.

Restaurant Verbena is located in the prestigious Miele Guide, which recognizes Asia's best chefs and Asian restaurants.

Sylvia Reynoso-Gala Culinary Arts Studio
Since: 1976
AT 101 SHAW BLVD., COR. PASIG BLVD.
TEL. NOS. 671-6486 • 671-6472 • 671-6489
For the complete schedule of our new Hands On, Demonstration-Student Participation, Easy, Exact, Money Making Courses for Beginners and Non Beginners. Visit our website @
www.sylviareynosogala.com

Binondo map a guide on how to feed one's mind and soul

COUNTRY COOKING

Micky Fenix

THE BIG BINONDO FOOD WOK May begins with three words: four hundred years of history and a culinary trail of decadent treats.

It describes what Binondo is—a place created during the Spanish era and a place to have good Chinese cooking. The map contains both the heritage trail and chow places, a thing made by Jean Marc Dy who is the ultimate Chinatown guide. It is available in some bookstores but you can order from him (banjfid@marilowalks.com). Now, why oyster a map that might make his "Chinatown walk-through" obsolete?

Dy says the map an "not just about food, but also about the relevance of his community as his city [is] feeding the mind as well as the soul."

The colorful map itself gives a bird's eye-view of the place bordered at one end by the Pasig River, where seamen flow through or sometimes stagnate at canals that dissect through Chinatown. One of the canals has an outing place called Ilaores (the Spanish smell for canal), but it is no longer the place as you as as it used to be.

Eating places

The eating places are sorted according to groups like Noodle Houses, Specialty Restaurants, Old Timers, Chinese fast food, Vegetarian Options, Lenten Dining, Filipino and Japanese Cuisine, Desserts and Pastry Shops. On his list are 77 eating places in all of Chinatown. These are marked with stars on the map, each with a number that corresponds to the number on a table containing the name and description of the place.

For a group of us that Dy took to show his personal restaurants choices, we went to seven restaurants in one day. In each one, we ate only the specialties. Which is why your Chinese guide will still be needed, because who can tell you those? But now the map will guide me if I want to go back to where and what we ate, such as the canals of Salitda, the duck sauce and oyster cake of Binondo, the northern specialties of Jiang Bei Dumplings, authentic Hokkien home-style cooking at Han Chun Yuan, Asami at the Café Mezzanine, the noodles with snail sauce at Quick Snack, and more at Mandi.

Heritage trail

What I find an interesting is the Heritage Trail that takes you to important streets, monuments and other landmarks in Chinatown.

Foremost is the Binondo Church; many people don't know that its beautiful statue is Basilica Menor del San Lorenzo, dedicated to the Filipino saint Lorenzo Ruiz.

Probably more known to the Chinese community is the Tz Yu Kong Temple founded in 1802. It has the Chinese name in characters, just like some of the stores. The map says that this is where one can still view the vanishing art of the Chinese opera being performed on some religious occasions.

The Ilaores Crisis de Longos at the corner of Ongpin and Tiendesa Puyat Streets is a stunning a shrine on one wall of a building with a cross and joss sticks. It's a physical statement of the mix of cultures and religions which all mold, an apt description of what Chinatown is all is.

E-mail: jdmayfield@yahoo.com

ENROLLMENT IS NOW GOING ON
Diploma Courses (Classes begin on February 22, 2010)
Commissaire 101: Short Courses
First Gourmet Academy
Capitol Greenstreet, Capitol Hills Drive, Old Balara, QC
Tel. Nos.: 951-6665 • 951-1687
info@firstgourmetacademy.com • www.firstgourmetacademy.com

GARFIELD

A. LIPAK

PUGAD BABOY

DICK TRACY

LOKOMOKOTS

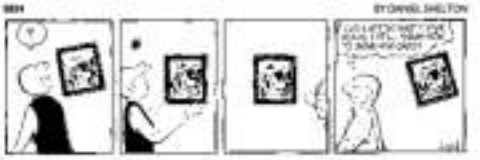
JAMES BOND

EMPAKE COMEDY

BABY BLUES

TULOOK

SEH



ATOMIC AND WEEDY

KIBO MACHINE

HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS DRAKE

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): Unexpected company may appear around noon today. Mysterious might break down. Minor challenges could occur. It is an unpredictable day.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): This is a slightly accident prone day, so be careful in the come way. You can be a romantic person. Don't arrive late, others you might learn something you never expect.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): Your financial scene presents many challenges today. You might find money. You might lose money. You might have some thing you own. You might find something you lost.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): You feel impatient and rebellious today. You may be inclined to do what you do. If the wrong thing happens, it's going to be the last straw!

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): Out of the blue some thing wonderful may happen. You might have to pay today. You might see money. Someone from your past may be ready to accept the responsibility.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): If you're dealing with any kind of person other than today, whether it's a friend, a lover, or a casual meeting or a large conference, one will advocate for change. You use a better way of doing things.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): You might want to call in sick today. Anyone who wants to advise you is wrong. Don't listen!

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): Unexpected opportunities or events. Being touchy to do with publishing and film media might fall in your lap today. It's unwise to take a course or go to school some place, grand.

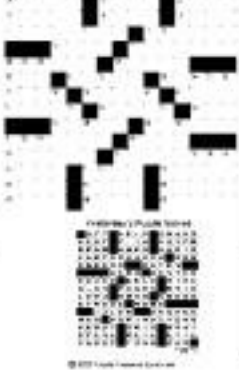
SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): Public gatherings might suddenly manifest themselves today. It is an out activity because the window of opportunity is small.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): A partner or close friend might tell the sad truth today. It is a wise and lucky day to be with someone. This is a pretty dangerous way to deal with a boring relationship.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): New technology might be introduced to your workplace today. Possibly technology can affect your health in a helpful way. An open mind is beneficial.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): Sudden things might really grow today! Finances are coming to you. Someone of words likely will be surprised by something. [This is an excellent power day for decisions in your own life aware of this, and be extra vigilant.]

CROSSWORD PUZZLE



CONCEPTIS SU DOKU

Conceptis Sudoku By Dan Feyes

		7				2		
	3			2		6	1	
2					6		4	
			8			7		
	2					6		
	5			1				
	9		7				4	
6		8		5		1		
	7					5		

Difficulty Level ★★★

HOW TO PLAY SU DOKU

Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9.
Tips and programs at www.sudoku.com

Answer to previous puzzle

4	5	1	8	9	7	4	3	6
7	9	6	2	4	3	1	5	8
3	4	8	6	5	1	7	2	9
1	2	9	7	3	6	5	8	4
5	8	3	1	2	4	6	9	7
6	7	4	5	8	9	3	1	2
8	1	2	4	7	5	9	6	3
9	6	7	3	1	8	2	4	5
4	3	5	9	6	2	8	7	1

Sexy, luscious his 'n' hers Valentine menu

From page C1

sures. The quaint indoor dining area gives a passionate view of Tuod lake and volcano.

Light and heavy

The selection for men is "Classic and Bold," laden with cream, butter and other heavy ingredients. For ladies, it's "Contemporary and Light," and indicative of more restful and healthy fare.

For starters, she will have Crispy Fried Oysters with Caviar Remoulade, while he will have baked Oysters in Tetsuzan Maitre d' Butter and Chilled "Primesse Oysters." All the oysters are sourced from Milan.

A serving of delicate foie gras imported from Perigue can be ordered for an additional P495 per person. Here has grapes, almond and wine reduction for her figure-conscious eaters.

Ladies' soup is Minestrone with Basil Ricotta and Parmesan Pesto, and his is Mushroom Velouty, Asparagus Mousseux and Provencale Crisps.

"Oysters are popular aphrodisiacs. Grapes, almonds, basil, figs, mushrooms, asparagus, lobster, pepper and other spicy items are considered aphrodisiac, too," says Placido de Ayala.

CRISPY fried oysters for ladies and spiced baked oysters for men

For the main course, she will have pan-fried Barramundi with oblings of Roasted Bell Pepper, Chorizo Bangkoon, Potatoes and Herbs, followed by 15- Week Sukiyaki and Spanish-style Cumbuas with Tomato Condiment and Herbs Risotto.

He, meanwhile, will have his Barramundi with shrimbolee, Lemon and Chive Cupellini in Caviar Cream Sauce, and Seared 120 Week and Lobster with Creamy Spinach, Tomato Fettuccini, Béarnaise and Potato Puree. All are served in heated plates.

"Apothap or Intermezzo is my favorite fish right now, and I try to use it as much as I can. It is ideal for the type of cooking that I enjoy doing for local and foreign guests," adds the chef.

The lady closes ends with Chocolate Hemisphere, a slice of rich, velvety chocolate cake, with baby black pepper infused panna cotta with Lubanto strawberries and Mango Sorbet; and with caramelized roasted arbutta Intense for him while sipping her Sevanna Tugetta infusion tea.

Restaurant Arbusa will be dressed up in his up guests' Valentine's Day celebration. Table will be set up in the lush, sequel garden near the Arbusa, where diners who are also staying in for the night can eat under the moonlight. The charming restaurant with glass and wood interior can comfortably seat 60 people.

HER CHOCOLATE dessert with dark chocolate and pepper (₱495 nett)

There's also a Country Romance Package from Feb. 12-14, inclusive of an overnight stay in one of the themed suites, full country breakfast for two, wine and cheese cocktails by sundown, milk and chocolate chip cookie treats at bedtime, and a special gift from D'Coral Pasta.

Restaurant Arbusa is at 300 Columbia Road, San Jose, Tagaytay. Call (0349)-4134567 or 7196099 in Manila. Visit www.thearwayarbusa.com.

Herbs and spices help prevent cancer

THERE IS SUPPOSEDLY THE LAST INSTALLment of Dr. Christine Gonzalez' guide to wellness.

Dr. Gonzalez' (MMS, Ph.D.) is co-founder of PinoScents Institute and director of Natural Medicine.

However, there remains so much of what she has written that I wish to share with you. While this is the last as a full column feature, in the succeeding weeks, I will continue to incorporate the rest of what she had painstakingly put together, to guide us through our path to wellness.

Of the seven simple ways to clean up our system and our diet to just one week, there are four more simple ways.

Pump up with light proteins

Lean proteins from sources such as free-range chicken and deep sea fishes will preserve your lean body mass, stabilize blood sugar levels and help you feel full longer. Soup-sea fishes are loaded with anti-cancer fats, including DHA (docosahexaenoic acid) and EPA (eicosapentaenoic acid), which slow down the spread of cancer, stimulate immune functions and counteract minerals from the sea are commonly found in foods from mineral-depleted soil.

Take at least three servings of fish per week to help prevent heart disease, lower blood pressure and reduce the risk of heart attacks and strokes.

If your schedule does not allow you to eat good, light protein prepared at home, take our grass of Shark Private Grown (SPG), mucopolysaccharide that grow in fresh water, from Global Vital Sources (tel. 8422338, 8920928 or 0917-8239728; www.globalvitalsources.com).

Benefits of HPG

- Conversion solution to pH problems of most diets
- Provides 12 times more digestible protein than beef. High-quality complete protein that is more clean and more digestible than any animal-derived protein. (HPG is 98 percent protein.)
- Rebuilds nerve tissue in the brain and throughout the body

KITCHEN RESCUE

Reggie Aspiras

B vitamins, including B12

- This superfood is called "the perfect food." It has high sources of vitamins C, E and monounsaturic calcium, magnesium, zinc, potassium, trace minerals, omega-3 fatty acids, including GLA, monounsaturated fats, beta-carotene, nucleic acids (RNA and DNA) and chlorophyll.
- It also stimulates the immune system, increases macrophage activity and has decongestant-cancer effects. There are several papers on the prevention and/or inhibition of cancer using HPG-not as well as downregulation of its DNA repair mechanisms.
- In one of the studies mentioned above, HPG was used in conjunction with chemotherapy and radiation therapy and still managed to achieve stunning responses in the survival rates of cancer patients.

Healthy fiber

Soluble fiber in oats and beans is filling, and it helps pull cholesterol out of the bloodstream, running it through the digestive tract. Psyllium, kidney beans, pinto beans, young beans and many others contain this food group, which is rich in protease inhibitors for cancer fighting, inositol hexaphosphate (phytic acid, also said in IP-6) and genistein for altering down the making of blood vessels from cancers (anti-angiogenesis).

Legumes also have the cleansing activity of soluble fiber. Researchers at the National Cancer Institute (USA) find a collection of substances in legumes, including isoflavones and phytoestrogens, that appear to have potent anti-cancer properties. A diet high in dried beans frequently may reduce the levels of insulin, glucose and markers of inflammation in men with advanced cancer who are at risk of cancer recurrence.

When fruits are rich in fiber, they are best as salad ingredients like pomelo, mandarin, cantaloupe.

Herbs and spices

The next time you prepare meals, try using a variety of spices. They might save your life. A growing body of research indicates that many spices can help prevent cancer.

Example, oregano ranks highest for antioxidant content. A recent Department of Agriculture study shows gram per gram, fresh oregano has demonstrated 42 times more antioxidant activity than apples, 30 times more than potatoes, 12 times more than oranges and 4 times more than blueberries.

Turmeric. Curcumin, the yellow pigment in turmeric, has been found to prevent tumor growth, kill cancerous cells, arrest the spread of cancer and disrupt tumor blood supply in laboratory human studies. Similar in strength to vitamins C and E, it has a taste-ranging effect on the body's immune system.

Small frequent feedings

Eat every 2.5 hours. Taking in calories at regular intervals keeps blood sugar stabilized and metabolism revved up. It is the best way to shed off all the excessive fats, salt, sugar.

Watch out for Dr. Christine's seven-day detox menu which I promise to print on this column.

For consultations with Dr. Christine and copies of her books "Are You Cut Prone & Control Cancer" and "Healing with the Rosary & Herbs," call 7265551 or 981-4140737.

On February 1 will be in Davao in touch and conduct my Mindanao Culinary Heritage Tour. Deadline for reservations is tomorrow. For reservations and a copy of our 2010 Cooking Class Schedule, call 9289295, 9273008, 6414744 or 0908-2372346.

E-mail the author at reggies@rogers-com.ph

MARITES ALLEN
ASTROLOGY FORECAST & FACE FORTUNE
2010
January 29 • 6PM
The Atrium
Watch and celebrate the Chinese New Year with the country's premier Feng Shui expert Marites Allen as she unveils to all the 2010 Feng Shui Forecast for the Year of the GOLDEN TIGER. Know your luck on LOVE, FAMILY, CAREER, HEALTH and WEALTH for 2010. Be there to experience this yearly afternoon Feng Shui affair only at The Podium. Limited seats only.
FOR YOUR LUCKY CHARMS & ENHANCERS VISIT:
www.mywealthluck.com
www.maritesallen.com

NEW Shakey's outlet in Quezon City

Pizza resto opens its biggest outlet

SHAKEY'S, HOME OF THE ORIGINAL THIN crust brick oven-baked pizza, opens its biggest restaurant in the world. It spans 700 square meters and is along Quezon Avenue in Quezon City.

The dining area is spacious. The lighting reflects soft tones.

With the specially designed interiors, original Shakey's chase will feel nostalgic sitting on chairs reminiscent of Shakey's branches dating in early years.

The restaurant has two private function rooms. The Fiamme allows guests, private and entertainment that children of all ages will love.

Whether it's Manager's Choice Thin Crust Pizza, Chick N' Chips or Milkshakes, Shakey's continues to serve these iconic products in the evolving market.

Call 77777 for delivery and if it's late, it's free.

"When I walk into our classrooms everyday, I am proud to know that the future's best chefs are already waiting for me."

Chef Gene Gonzalez
Instructor & President
Center for Asian Culinary Studies

At CACS, we believe in bringing out your true potential by giving you the best of everything the culinary world can provide. We make sure we have the best educators, the best ingredients, the best curriculum, the best skills and techniques, and now the best to learn and experiment should be shared with all of our students. That is why after 9 years of opening CACS, we are breaking more barriers with our workshops programs, serving students from all walks of life and giving them brighter culinary potentials, and reasoning the true passion of cooking & baking.

ENROLLMENT ONGOING FOR OUR FEBRUARY 2010 PROFESSIONAL PROGRAM
- 2 x a week Certificate Program in Cooking & Baking Skills
- Sunday Certificate Program in Cooking & Baking Skills

Visit us at www.cacschef.com or call 776-9331 / 725-5080 for more information

NEW PROGRAMS & RECREATIONAL CLASSES AVAILABLE!!!

CELEBRATE CHINESE NEW YEAR IN STYLE AT THE PODIUM
12 ADB Avenue, Ortigas Center, Mandaluyong City

Refreshing coffee parfait

[illegible] CAFE SERVES COFFEE PARFAIT which has layers of coffee jelly, vanilla and whipped cream topped with mocha ice cream and another layer of whipped cream plus coffee jelly. Dutch coffee is at the bottom and it's mixed with melted vanilla ice cream and coffee jelly. UCC Park Cafés at Eastwood Mall Spec Park. Other UCC Coffee branches: Paseo Center, Makati City, tel. 01 84388; Commonwealth, QUEZON: Fairlane Town Center, 3451 390; and Bonjoc Circle, The Fort, 8291 647.

Mango rice cake

Belmont Hotel offers a Valentine package on Feb. 1-28. Inclusions are room accommodation based on Sir Love, Promotion and Super Sir Love rooms, buffet breakfast, welcome drinks, two 45- minute foot scrubs with 15- minute hot lotiontop for two at SM Manila Spa; complimentary pastries at La Amorette bar and cafe; complimentary Mango Oh mango Nonmocktail; 15 percent discount on food and beverages at Kaichi Japanese Restaurant.

Cafe Garapata and La Amorette bay and cafe based wins its carte menus; 20 percent discount on spa services and entrance at Club Manila. Celebrate Valentine's Day, Sachoiwk and dinner are also available for P1,800 per couple at Cafe Garapata/La Amorette bar and cafe and P1,288 per people at Kaichi Japanese Restaurant. Promo is valid Feb. 12-14.

Belmont Hotel is at Roxas Boulevard cor. Gen Gil Puyat Avenue, Pasay City. tel. 4367777 locally 102, 7110, 120; e-mail sales@belmontmanila.com.ph.

Bacon and mushroom omelet

Flapjacks offers Bacon 'N Mushroom Omelette, Weekend Breakfast Buffet and Classic Pancakes with Bacon at Greenbelt 2, Makati, tel. 7290121; Theatre Mall, Greenhills, San Juan, MM8838; Robinsons Midtown Manila, 5812240; and UP Ayala Technohub, Commonwealth, Quezon City, 6012126. Visit www.flapjacks.com.ph.

DINING OUT

SEAFOOD PLATTER
The Red Crab Alimango House proffers Causeway Bay Typhoon Platter Crab, Singapore Pepper Sauce and King Seafood Platter. Pinoy Platter Steamed Pla Pla and Sea shrimps cooked in clams boil, Sinabawang Bangus Belly, Sinigang sa Bayabas, Pinirito Bangus, Pritong Camaron Rebosado, Inihaw Bangus a la Binlok, Seafood in Coconut and Chilies. Its here-selling crabs are Marlboro, Szechuan, butter ginger, Hotel's Pepper Crab, Supremo's Salt and Pepper Crab and Typhoon Platter Crab. The Red Crab Alimango House is at 144 JSB Bldg. cor. Sct. Delgado, Tomas Morato, Quezon City. tel. 41 24125, 7744686.

HYPERMARKET exhibit features creatively designed SM Green Bags.

Winners of 'Jazz Up Your Green Bag' on exhibit

SM HYPERMARKET WILL PRESENT the winners of its "Jazz Up Your Green Bag" contest in a season of exhibits this January in various branches to instill awareness on environment preservation among its shoppers.

The competition, which attracted almost 500 entries from 19 SM Hypermarket branches, encouraged shoppers to creatively design with holiday theme their SM Green Bags using environment-friendly or recyclable materials such as paper scraps, bottle caps, old newspapers, leaves, ropes.

Fifty-seven entries were declared the best masterpieces, winning first, second and third prizes. The winners received SM gift certificates and gift baskets.

The first reusable shopping bag of its kind in the country, the SM Green Bag is a recyclable, economic, multipurpose bag aimed at reducing the use of plastics, especially in shopping. To further help promote its use, SM Green Bags are sold buy-one-take-one during "My Own Bag" day (Mondays-Fridays) in selected SM Supermarket, SM Hypermarket and SM SaveMore outlets.

SM Hypermarket has branches in Sucat, Bicutan, Marilao, Valenzuela, Molino, Clark, Mall of Asia, North Edsa, Pasig, Taytay Montalban, Sanchia, Batangas, Muntinlupa, Fairview, Makati, Las Piñas, Novaliches and Cebu's Manhan.

EXHIBIT hopes to entice more shoppers to use SM Green Bags.

ENTERTAINMENT

Libre Eleanor G. Velasco

Mobile Alert: Text INQ ENTERTAINMENT to 2467 | Website: www.inquirer.net/entertainment | E-mail: entertainment@inquirer.net.ph

A Travolta landing in Haiti

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti—John Travolta landed his own jet in Haiti carrying relief supplies and a team of doctors and firefighting volunteers for earthquake victims. Travolta's wife, Kelly Preston, was with him. AP

STARS FOR OTHERS

MOST TRUSTED CELEBRITIES

JAMES Earl Jones (left) and Tom Hanks (center) topped the list of the most trusted celebrities, according to the Forbes.com poll released Monday. American celebrities earn an instant boost in confidence, awareness and appeal. Michael J. Fox (right) placed 2nd. Others in the top 10: Morgan Freeman, 4th, with TV host Mike Rowe; Sally Field, 6th; Will Smith, Bill Cosby and Denzel Washington. AFP

The eternal problem of very limited funds

By Rachel B. Cruz

HOW DO BIG-BUDGET, MAINstream filmmakers bring to producer dream projects with the "very limited" budget they will get from proponents of the Cinemalaya Philippine Independent Film Festival?

The issue was tackled during the launch last week of the annual festival. "On-cue" were Mark Meily, Mario O'Hara, Joel Lamangan, Aureus Solito and Gil Portes, leaders in the film over-50 sector (Boomers category).

All five will be awarded a seed production grant of P500,000 and an additional P500,000 post-production grant. Director Boboy Garovillo was spared by Pilipino Shorts/Features who have deemed at least three full-length feature films (and more) released commercially.

"Young filmmakers who have joined the 'film fest' did fit in cue-ly," said Lamangan, director of "Tribo," which tells a story of tribal activists in the 1970s.

THE FREEMAN, 5A

WHAT'S ON AT ROBINSONS

MMTA MOVIE GUIDE

NOW SHOWING

Give Your Looks an Upgrade

Facial Care Centre FOR MEN offers **5 Ways** to rid your skin of its flaws

1 Acne scars and Blemishes

Sure, chicks dig the Colin Farrell scruffy look, but acne scars and blemishes do not equal ruggedly handsome. Pocking pimples and up in scars and blemishes - which last longer than the actual zits! Before someone calls you Crater Face, try this **Diamond Peel**. It's a highly advanced procedure that'll painlessly remove old dead surface skin. It gets rid of colon acne scars, blemishes and other dark spots.

2 Pimple breakouts and Back Acne

You've already been through hell in high school (unless you managed to skip the awkward stage). Acne on your face outbreaks, pogo pimples, whitehead acne on your back ruins your sex appeal. So leave acne to past pubescent memories. **LightCure Acne Therapy** is an easy, effective way to get rid of the acne - fast. It uses a high intensity blue-violet light to kill acne bacteria. Amazingly, it treats zits on any part of the body, be faster than other procedures.

3 Fine lines and Wrinkles

Lousy pick-up lines and fine facial lines: neither will get you the girl. And won't go denying your age, because the wrinkles are a giveaway. **Advanced LaserTone** is a non-surgical inactive treatment that will get rid of those fine lines and wrinkles - without the need for stitches, cuts or injections! Your skin will look years younger. Revealing your age is up to you.

4 Loose, sagging skin

Everything is better these days. Want to look years younger in less than an hour? **ReFirme** is a skin-tightening treatment with no needles, stitches, scars or sedation involved. After a quick 45-minute session, bags are lifted. Lines are diminished and skin is firmer.

5 Skin Fatigue

Stressed? Who isn't these days? Relax and get pampered with **Shi-Zen D-Tox**. The combination of Shiatsu massage with a detoxification facial mask will surely send you to a state of nirvana. It improves the texture of your skin and corrects skin fatigue dysfunctions.

All treatments are available at the FOR MEN Centre. Call 913-7888 for a free consultation.

EXCLUSIVE to Members

Get the first pick on SALE items

2-HOUR SPECIAL

Jan. 29, Friday 10am to 12noon

SM NORTH EDSA • SM SUCAT • SM BALIWAG • SM ROSARIO

Take 10% OFF* on all items

SM | OUR HOME | ACE Hardware | ACE Builders | TOY KINGDOM | SURPLUS | Kultura | BABY | adidas

At the Cinemas

GLORIETTA 4

GREENBELT 1

GREENBELT 2

ALABANG TOWN CENTER

TRINOMA

MARKET! MARKET!

AYALA CENTER CEBU

MARQUEE

For verification, please call 729-7777

Ayala Malls

EXCLUSIVE

OPENS FEBRUARY 3
AT GLORIETTA 4
GREENBELT 3 &
TRINOMA CINEMAS

★★★★

At the Malls

GLORIETTA
Pinakwento Asia 2010
January 28-February 2
Activity Center

AYALA CENTER CEBU
Meet & Greet Side A
January 29, 5:00 pm
Activity Center

MARKET! MARKET!
Big Blue Extravaganza
See the world's biggest baby
January 16-February 4
Activity Center

TRINOMA
William Hanson and the
Chorale String Quartet
Live at Trinoma
January 28, 7:00pm
Level 4 Park

MRT/LRT
Ouida
January 10 to 31
For more details,
please call
Hajji at 687-0710

Presents Freebies Surprises

And that's just the start

Enjoy exclusive perks on your shopping, dining and entertainment choices only with the Ayala Malls A Card

To apply, visit any Ayala Malls Concierge or log on to www.ayalamalls.com.ph/acard

Glorietta · Greenbelt · Trinoma · Alabang Town Center · Market! Market! · Ayala Center Cebu · Marquee Mall

GREENHILLS CINEMAS

THEATRE MALL

PROMENADE

1 2 GREENHILLS 3 4 5 THEATRE

What's with Valentine's?

FILMMAKER Gary Marshall on Valentine's, the holiday, and "Valentine's Day" his multipronounced, all-star romance: "Valentine's means different things to different people. The other holidays are all clear-cut. Christmas, we decorate a tree, you give me a present, we eat turkey, you go home, go to bed. New Year's Eve, you drink, you kiss at 12 midnight, sing 'Auld Lang Syne' and say, go home, go to bed. Valentine's Day is vague, it could be any of a dozen things and it is hard to define. And why it makes for a good story."

OVERHEARD

TV HOST Shaina Quimbatbat, current Women's Health cover girl, on her new love. Said Shaina: "When I was married, I was dependent on my husband financially. Because he gave me all I ever [wanted]. I didn't feel I was of any use. 2009 was like a roller coaster [ride], going through my divorce. Now that it's over, there's so much more I'm keeping for. I'm loving tomorrow."

NOW SHOWING

SANDRA BULLOCK

THE BLIND SIDE

The eternal...

From page D1

"You need to doing stuff films," said Alfonso, who snagged the indie hits "Ang Jokes sa Pasko" and "Ang Libas sa Aalala." That you Abrajan is doing "Pink Halo-Halo," which looks to release in theaters Mindanao.

"Everything should be ready before filming. You can't waste time thinking of issues (angles and lighting, or rehearsing your scenes. You should maximize every day," Alfonso added.

Perez, known for the award-winning indie productions "Mga Munting Tinig" and "Serenggeli," agreed: "You start writing your script on the first [call] be working on a very limited budget."

Perlas, who's doing "Two Pianists," confirmed: "For example, the original script of Two Pianists features a wind ensemble in the opening scene. There [were] 60 of a full. That would have cost us P200,000—for only two scenes! ... [Or] scene, I will say no more. [On Rainer, 'Let's see ... how we can enhance the story, effect without changing the storyline.'"

Others, who does in the horizontal piece "Ang Pagbibit ni Andres Bonifacio," also said a tight budget was nothing new to him. The used to doing films in 10 days—[And] in the days of quickie films in the '70s, "the shortest one].

THE VAMPIRE'S ASSISTANT

NOW SHOWING

PG-13

Landmark film

Hayward said that Lino Brocka's masterwork film, "Insiang," was a quickie. "It was shot in 12 days. And up till now, it is getting critical acclaim." Others wrote the screenplay for Brocka's "Tinimbang ka Subalit Kulang," released in 1976.

"You just need to work within your budget, without sacrificing quality," he said. "Your movie may not have big names or expensive set designs, but it should have substance and high-caliber performances. It's your choice."

Others it could to be crying stupid loom for his entry, Lamangan for [opportunity] Dennis Zobarte, Gino Abajo, Joe Dee Perlas, Marvin Agustin, Tirso Cruz III and Jennylyn Mercado in "Segio."

"You'll be surprised to know that a lot of mainstream actors are dying to do indie films," stated Perez. "Most of them are very easy to deal with, if you [stick] a good."

The 6th Cinemalaya, at the Cultural Center of the Philippines in Pasay City, begins July 9. The awards ceremony is set on July 18.

Greenbelt · Trinoma · Market! Market! · Glorietta · Alabang Town Center · Ayala Center Cebu

GREENBELT CINEMAS

EXPERIENCE THE DIFFERENCE

2009 GOLDEN GLOBE WINNER
BEST DIRECTOR & BEST MOTION PICTURE!

WATCH IT BEST IN
DOLBY DIGITAL 3D

AVATAR

NOW SHOWING AT GATEWAY CINEPLEX 10

CINEMA ACCESS: 395-5555

MOVIEWORLD

ROBINSONS MOVIEWORLD CINEMA MOVIE GUIDE

www.robinsonsmovieworld.com

GALLERIA

1 LEGION
2 THE TOOTH FAIRY
3 CIRQUE DU FREAK
4 ISLAND BOSS
5 PAANO NA KAYA
6 CLOUDY WITH A CHANCE OF MEATBALLS
7 THE SPY NEXT DOOR
8 Valentine Suite
9 DOG CHASER HOUSE
10 SANTIAGO

MANILA

1 LEGION
2 THE TOOTH FAIRY
3 CIRQUE DU FREAK
4 ISLAND BOSS
5 PAANO NA KAYA
6 CLOUDY WITH A CHANCE OF MEATBALLS
7 SOLOMON KANE
8 SANTIAGO

METRO EAST

1 THE TOOTH FAIRY
2 LEGION
3 CIRQUE DU FREAK
4 ISLAND BOSS
5 PAANO NA KAYA
6 CLOUDY WITH A CHANCE OF MEATBALLS
7 SOLOMON KANE
8 SANTIAGO

NUVALICHES

1 LEGION
2 THE TOOTH FAIRY
3 PAANO NA KAYA
4 CIRQUE DU FREAK

FORUM ROBINSONS

1 THE TOOTH FAIRY
2 LEGION
3 CIRQUE DU FREAK
4 PAANO NA KAYA

NOW SHOWING

MOVIEWORLD

STA. ROSA

1 LEGION
2 THE TOOTH FAIRY
3 PAANO NA KAYA
4 CLOUDY WITH A CHANCE OF MEATBALLS

LIPA

1 SHERLOCK HOLMES
2 PAANO NA KAYA
3 ALVIN AND THE CHIPMUNKS: THE SQUEAKQUEL
4 AMATAR
5 CLOUDY WITH A CHANCE OF MEATBALLS

DASMARIÑAS

1 LEGION
2 THE TOOTH FAIRY
3 PAANO NA KAYA
4 CLOUDY WITH A CHANCE OF MEATBALLS

STA.MESA

1 LEGION
2 THE TOOTH FAIRY
3 PAANO NA KAYA
4 CLOUDY WITH A CHANCE OF MEATBALLS
5 AMATAR
6 THE SPY NEXT DOOR

IMUS

1 LEGION
2 THE TOOTH FAIRY
3 PAANO NA KAYA
4 CLOUDY WITH A CHANCE OF MEATBALLS

ANGELES

1 LEGION
2 THE TOOTH FAIRY
3 PAANO NA KAYA
4 CLOUDY WITH A CHANCE OF MEATBALLS

TACLOBAN

1 LEGION
2 PAANO NA KAYA
3 CLOUDY WITH A CHANCE OF MEATBALLS

DUMAGUETE

1 SHERLOCK HOLMES
2 PAANO NA KAYA
3 THE SPY NEXT DOOR

BACOLOD

1 LEGION
2 THE TOOTH FAIRY
3 PAANO NA KAYA
4 CLOUDY WITH A CHANCE OF MEATBALLS
5 ALVIN & THE CHIPMUNKS: THE SQUEAKQUEL
6 AMTAR

ILOILO

1 LEGION
2 THE TOOTH FAIRY
3 PAANO NA KAYA
4 CLOUDY WITH A CHANCE OF MEATBALLS
5 SHERLOCK HOLMES

GENSAN

1 SHERLOCK HOLMES
2 PAANO NA KAYA
3 ALVIN & THE CHIPMUNKS: THE SQUEAKQUEL
4 THE SPY NEXT DOOR

ILOCOS NORTE (NOW OPEN!)

1 PAANO NA KAYA
2 CLOUDY WITH A CHANCE OF MEATBALLS
3 SHERLOCK HOLMES

Experience the most delicious event since macaroni met cheese.

Watch this movie in Movieworld's DIGITAL 3D CINEMA

Now Showing at Robinsons Movieworld Galleria Cinema 6

MOVIEWORLD

SM CINEMA

visit: www.smcinema.com

ONLINE PROMO!

PREMIUM ITEM GIVEAWAY

Log on to www.smcinema.com and get a chance to win these premium items

NOW SHOWING

ORIGINAL SHOWTIMES

IMAX

SM MALL OF ASIA

SM MOA IMAX

SM MEGA FOOD COURT

SM MEGA FOOD COURT

SLING SIDE

PODIUM

metro manila

SM NORTH EDSA	SM MALL OF ASIA	MEGAMALL
CITY MANILA	TAYTAY	CITY SAN LAZARO
CITY STA. MESA	SOUTHMALL	MARIKINA
VALENZUELA	CITY ANNEX	CITY ANTIPOLO

luzon

CITY PAMPANGA	CITY LIPA	CITY LAGUNA
CITY CLARK	CITY BATANGAS	CITY BACOLOD
CITY BALIWAG	CITY STA. ROSA	CITY MARILAO
CITY DASMA	CITY DAGUPAN	BALANGA
BAGUIO	MEGAMALL	BUTUAN

visayas • mindanao

CITY CEBU	CITY CEBU	CITY ILOILO
CAGAYAN DE ORO	CITY DAVAO	

ALL MAJOR CREDIT CARDS NOW ACCEPTED IN ALL SM CINEMA BRANCHES

OFFERS A WIDE VARIETY OF FOOD AND DRINKS AT ALL SM CINEMA LOBBIES

'We must all remember not to forget'

MANILA—I'M SITTING IN MY bedroom scratching my ears' favor in deep sleep. They always tell me suck my earlobe than I ever do, which gives me time alone to gather my thoughts...and recollect events.

This month, three years ago, I had an important tasks than much: being a new cook (who has an incredibly noisy disposition, and gets giddy at the sight of celebrities doing their groceries), grilling my first dinner for television (I'm a nagging stiff neck and lisp artist (Bernard), Jr. Martin Cannon); doing weekly chores, picking my daughter up from school.

But there was one important event that I was happy and honored to be invited to, because it allowed me the chance to once again give my respects to a treasured woman, an inspiration to most of Dao constituents during a dark time in our country's history, former President Corazon C. Aquino.

Sunshine yellow

I was invited to sing "Bayan Ko" at the launch on Sunday, Jan. 24, of the Cory Research Aquino Inc. (CRAI) at the Greenhills Theater. The occasion—there are two occasions—are very unique, much like the woman for whom it was created and after whom it was named. The larger occasion has a yellow hues, and the smaller one has a golden sun against a black face. But both have sunshine yellow wraps, the faces of Noynoy and Cory side by side, and the words "INSPIRING LEADERSHIP FOR THE FUTURE" printed in bold.

The two occasions are so together as a special book package. The book, "A Woman Elevated to Sainthood," is written by Atty. Teddy Boy Locsin.

President Cory (Tita Cory to those closest to her) has become an icon of democracy to the people of Filipinos born after the assassination of Senator Ninoy Aquino on Aug. 21, 1983, and the People Power Revolution in late February 1986). Those events, now encrusted in our history books, still live in the minds and hearts of those who were around at the time, but are now historical references to

You just never know what'll happen in a live performance

those who were not.

Hence, the Inner Search design.

The atmosphere in the Ayala Museum on Sunday afternoon was not somber in the least. Quite the contrary, it was as if a newer family was being hosted, complete with marching bands and streamers and fiesta food. It was, after all, a celebration.

Maria Shenaya (this month's energy is unchained)—I got first hour rendering Bayan Ko's powerful feeling distinct and, accompanied on the piano by Sharon Cuneta, sang two songs that in the occasion "You Are the Sunshine of My Life," such a

BACK STORY

Cory Sarmiento

fine alternate lyrics for the lady being honored, and an original composition of his titled "Impossible Dreams."

I was then introduced, and I headed to the stage, asked everyone to stand to honor the woman who had inspired us as a nation, and proceeded to sing. The "Labas Flights" hand sign was raised here and there, and the eyes of Tita Cory's closest friends glistened with her memory.

Glitch

There was but one glitch. When my backing track started to play, I noticed that the song was in a higher than I remember it to be, a full step higher! I looked at Martin who could tell something was the matter ... then I looked at Martin whose level expression was indecipherable ... and prayed that every single emotion I had learned in training my vocal techniques would pop off today. Please let my phenomenon not kick in! Ah, the thrill of a live performance; you just never know what'll happen.

Whatever hues unfold from these occasions, who else I terribly gave a shout-out to in my simple speech. He recalled the feeling of panic when Imelda Ty Tiki Pingle Rumsey called, asking him to design the special

timepiece ... the encouragement from his wife Bea ... and the short letter that he wrote to Tita Cory to place him in an atmosphere of creativity.

At the end of that short address, he said: "Today ... Cory becomes an ever-alive again. We must all remember not to forget."

Revenue filed in the auditor concerned for the unveiling of the new numbers, in the presence of the Aquino children and grandchildren, **Pinky Aquino-Abellana**, a few months of thanks on behalf of the family.

As I write, all 601 sets of the special Cory watch have been sold out.

There's now a Swatch collector for many years, having received my very first piece when I turned 15 (on the first day of the Edsa Revolution, funnily enough), so I'm sure that I'm still to receive set No. 22. I eventually receive the more collectible pieces for display only, never to be worn. Because I'm a Swatch collector. The artist, if only to be continually reminded of those two words written in black on the plastic sapphire yellow strap: "BAGONG ANTLOOK 02." These words will forever inspire me to fight for a better, brighter Philippines.

When I arrived home after the launch, my daughter greeted me at the front door and gave me a watch, now around my wrist. She asked me to put it on her wrist, which I did. Carefully taking off the watch, I told Bea that as much as I am about the lady dressed in sunshine—and I will not have forgotten to remember

Oprah still US top fave

LOS ANGELES— Oprah Winfrey regained her throne as America's favorite TV personality in 2008, but TV and radio talk show host Glenn Beck made a debut on the second Harris Poll, coming in second place.

Beck, 45, who hosts a Fox News channel political TV show as well as the nationally syndicated talk radio program "The Glenn Beck Program," faced

real talk Republican, independents and those over 65 years old. Another influential Fox News commentator, Bill O'Reilly placed fifth.

Seven of the top 10 were faces that have been for years dropped in their place rose four in 2008. Winfrey moved up from No. 4 last year to endorse Barack Obama for the presidency and her rivals very likely was due to his announcement last November that she would conduct popular TV show" in 2011 after 25 years.

Winfrey did best among women over 35 years old, Democrats and moderates — she was the top choice

would be seen. The only other women on the top 10 list was Ellen DeGeneres, who led in fourth place with "Women" actor Hugh Laurie. DeGeneres' daytime talk show and chat shows and will make her debut as the new judge on top-rated TV program "American Idol" in February.

The complete list: 1) Oprah Winfrey, 2) Glenn Beck, 3) Jay Leno, 4) Ellen DeGeneres, 5) Hugh Laurie 6) Jon Stewart, 7) Clarence Brown 8) Mark Harmon, 9) David Letterman, 10) Bill O'Reilly. Survey